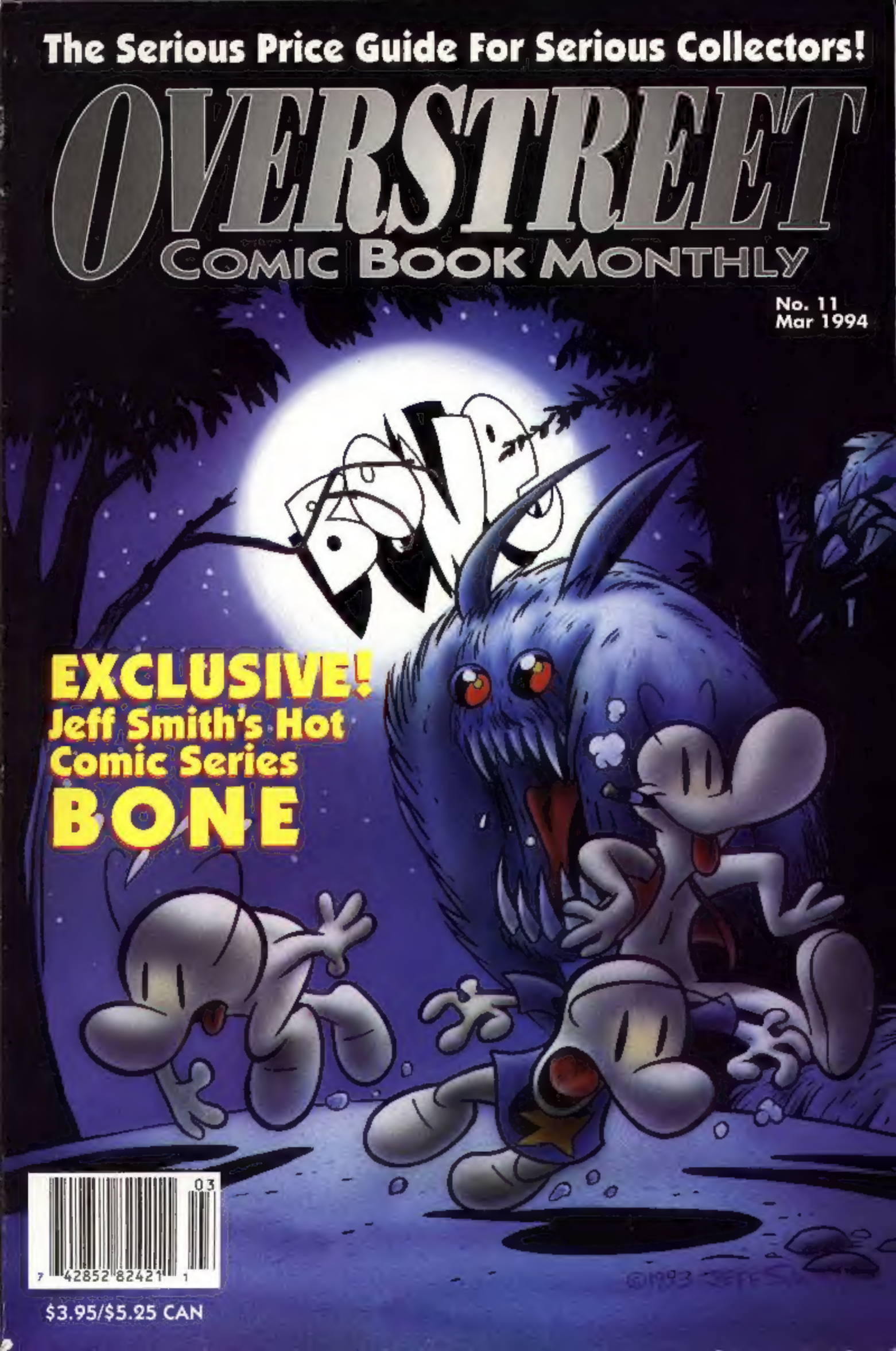
The Serious Price Guide For Serious Collectors!

OVERSTREET
COMIC BOOK MONTHLY

No. 11
Mar 1994



EXCLUSIVE!
Jeff Smith's Hot Comic Series
BONE

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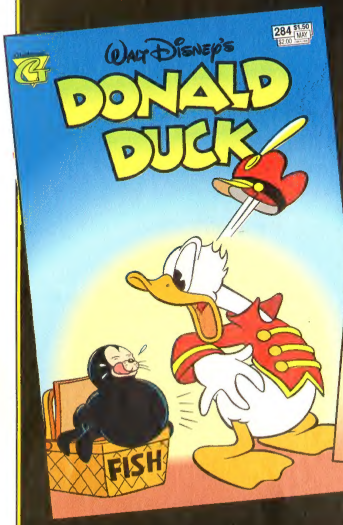
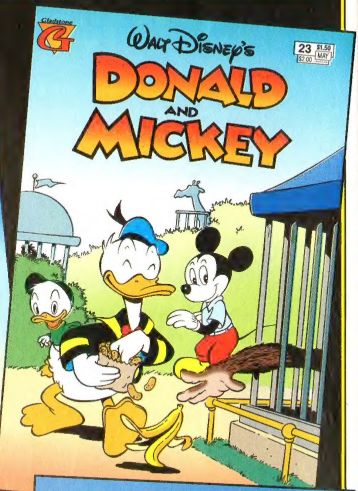
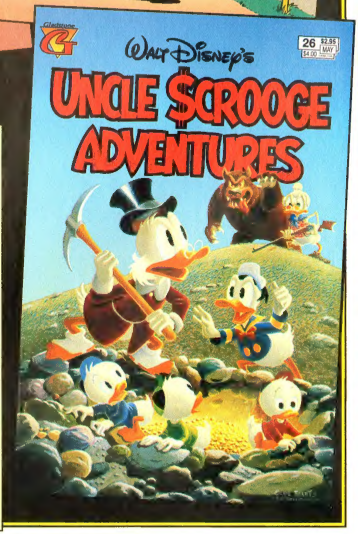
THIS MONTH IN GLADSTONE







Donald Duck #284
Donald's the king of cloud control, but jealousy may rain on his reign in "The Master Rainmaker," by Carl Barks. Our chronological reprinting of Al Taliaferro's Donald Duck continues with the first of the 1938 daily strips. The cover features art by Taliaferro.

Donald and Mickey #23
Huey, Dewey and Louie have a new pet pigeon, but it's one quirky bird! "Rocket Wing Saves the Day" is another classic ten pager by Carl Barks. Mickey and Goofy then take an Egyptian excursion in part one of "Don't Call Me Tut!," courtesy of the Disney Studios and Jaime Diaz. Cover art by Mau Heymans.

Uncle Scrooge Adventures #26
The cover of this double-sized issue is from a Carl Barks' painting based on our lead-off story "Back to the Klondike." This landmark Uncle Scrooge epic features art not included in the original comic! Then, the world's richest duck explains the mysteries of finance in the much requested "Uncle Scrooge and Money," drawn by Tony Strobl. Don't miss this one!

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OVERSTREET
COMIC BOOK MONTHLY

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VF/NM? Ain't No Such Thing!

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The CBM mail box recently contained a letter from Gene Shackleford of California. In it, Gene asked "After reading the 1st Edition of the Overstreet Grading Guide, I couldn't help noticing that it did not refer to "combination grades" like VG/FN, FN/VF, or VF/NM. Since you are listed as the co-author, I'd be interested in knowing your view of these grades."

The industry wide use of "in-between grades", has been a common practice since the beginning of fandom. Many utilize them in order to more specifically describe a grade exactly between two adjacent grades. Although I do not think that the practice is inappropriate per se', I also do not encourage the practice of using the in-between grades, and for several reasons:

First is a definitional argument. I hold the opinion that, technically, these combination grades attempt to assign a grade to the imaginary line of demarcation BETWEEN two grades, a line that really doesn't exist. As an example, take the (if you'll pardon the expression) "pseudo-grade" VF/NM. I propose that a comic can either grade as high as possible in the Very Fine range, or as low as possible in the Near Mint Range... BUT NOT BOTH! If you accept the idea that there are eight (and only eight) basic grades, Poor (PR), Fair (FR), Good (GD),Very Good (VG), Fine (FN), Very Fine (VF), Near Mint (NM), and Mint (MT), then this concept is not too hard to grasp. I do support the use of plus signs and minus signs to indicate the upper and lower ends of each grade range. But Very Fine plus (VF+) is still a distinctly different (and significantly lower) grade than Near Mint minus (NM-)!

I have a second reservation concerning combination grades. It is related to both consumer confusion and the credibility of the grader. I'm interested in the issue of potential consumer confusion because I often buy comics through the mail. When I see a book advertised as VF/NM, I think "which is it? Is the book really a high VF or a low NM. And if it's a low NM, why confuse the issue with the use of VF label at all?" In most every case during my three decades of collecting experience, comics graded VF/NM were always Very Fine to VF+ and did not qualify as Near Mint.

In the area of seller credibility, I sometimes wonder about it... especially if combination grades are used to describe nearly every book on the list. Over-use of combination grades may be an indicator that the grader could be having difficulty differentiating between VG and FN, FN and VF, and most importantly VF and NM. I'll be the first one to admit that I have encountered comics that defied my ability to absolutely classify them as, say VF or NM. But in these cases, I refrain from using VF/NM in favor of VF+, because it is the safest and most conservative label for buyer.

That's my opinion... but let me say in closing, that many dealers, collectors, and close friends whose grading skills I sincerely respect, have a different and totally opposite opinion on this topic. I welcome any and all feedback and look forward to hearing your point of view. Best

Gary

Gary M. Carter

OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK MONTHLY

PUBLISHER
Robert M. Overstreet
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Gary M. Carter
SENIOR RESEARCH EDITOR
Jeff Overstreet
CONSULTING ART DIRECTORS
Lisa Carter
Joe Sikoryak
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Tony Overstreet
PRODUCTION EDITOR
Michael Naiman
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Carol M. Overstreet
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER
Todd M. Hoffer
ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Pat S. Calhoun
Nick Wyche
MARKET ANALYST
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SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER
Donna Anderson
FINANCIAL ANALYST
Debra Johnson
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Bernadette Eichorn
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*Eva Diller * Betty McChesney*
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MAGAZINE CONSULTANT
Bill Howard
TRAVEL CONSULTANT
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS & ARTISTS
Michael Allen
Bruno Andreacchi
*Erik Andresen * Mark Arnold*
*Steve Beery * Pat S. Calhoun*
*Jan Childress * Ray Connell*
Brock H. Dickinson
*John K. Edwards * Steve Fritz*
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New Return Policy; Marvel/Spumco Team

CBM FYI

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's #1!

It's the best selling comics of 1992 and 1993! It was no surprise to anyone that the first chapters of the Reign of the Supermen arc were the top selling comics of 1993. In fact, throw in Adventures of Superman #500 and you have the top five selling comics of the previous year, according to Diamond.

1992 was dominated by Superman #75, when Doomsday did the Man of Steel in. Anyone who's read this column knows that the green guy with the horrible facial condition comes back this April to take another shot at DC's epitome of all that's virtuous (see article elsewhere in this issue).

It's kind of like the old saying "you just can't keep a good superhero down." Then again, I could also quote the Green Berets when they say "Killing Is Our Business, And Business Is Good."

Diamond/Capital City Institute 30-Day Return Policies

Retailers and fans should jump for joy, and some publishers I know of are gnashing their teeth, because the two biggest direct distributors, Diamond and Capital City, have instituted 30-day return policies.

What this basically means is "if a comic is late by more than 30 days from the originally promised shipping date, it is 100% returnable." Any publisher who blows that deadline is going to have to eat a lot of comics.

Both firms announced the new policy on January 3, but it will not go into effect until April.

Still, this could put a dent in what some feel is one of the biggest problems currently plaguing the industry... namely late material. Along with retailers, those of us who just want our comics on time, every time, will no doubt be better off.

Malibu To Go Animated

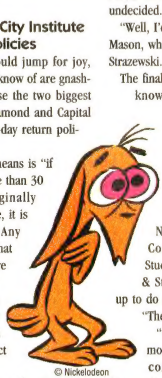
Malibu Comics announced they have been part of a "stock swap" with a company called Worldwide Entertainment & Sports. The reason for the swap is that Worldwide is part of a major entertainment conglomerate that includes an animation studio.

If you haven't guessed yet, let Malibu creative director Tom Mason spell it out for you. "The focus of all this is on the Ultraverse. If a show comes to pass, it will definitely be an Ultraverse-based one."

Worldwide is not unfamiliar with animating comic heroes. They do job work on Fox's "X-Men" as well as the syndicated Battletech. As for which Ultraverse character(s) will grace the small screen, that's undecided.

"Well, I'd like the one I work on," says Mason, who works on Prototype with Len Strazewski.

The final outcome will probably not be known until the Fall of '95, when Malibu and Worldwide hope to begin airing the new series.



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Marvel & Spumco Team Up To Do "Comic Book"

Now it can be told, Marvel Comics and Spumco Studios (creators of Ren & Stimpy), are teaming up to do a comic book called "The Comic Book."

"It's going to be more like an old-style comic book," says Spumco's John Kricfalusi, who was the original creative force behind the Nickelodeon show. "It will be bigger, and the old kind of color grained paper, thick pulpy stuff, with dog-hair and stuff. Like a real comic. It's not a graphic novel", he sneers.

Kricfalusi will bring back the one character that got Nickelodeon up in arms, George Liquor. He will also introduce us to a number of other new characters such as Jimmy The Hapless Boy and He-Hog, The Atomic Pig. But the real purpose of The Comic Book is, it is a *comic* book. It's supposed to make us laugh.

"That's why it's called Comic Book!," he exclaims. "It's the one comic book that isn't ashamed of being a comic book. It's proud of its comic bookdom. Marvel and DC Comics of the 60's weren't ashamed of being comics. Now, everybody's got serious stories and all the characters have clenched teeth and knitted brows. Let's be serious! All these guys are running around in long underwear and their serious."

Mort Todd, who will be the editor on the spot for The Comic Book, also notes that John K. will be revamping the old Atlas Animal Funnies of the 40's and 50's... although Kricfalusi noted that he and the Spumco staff will be coming up with their own plot lines.

Many look forward to The Comic Book in order see for themselves what all the Nickelodeon-George Liquor controversy is about.

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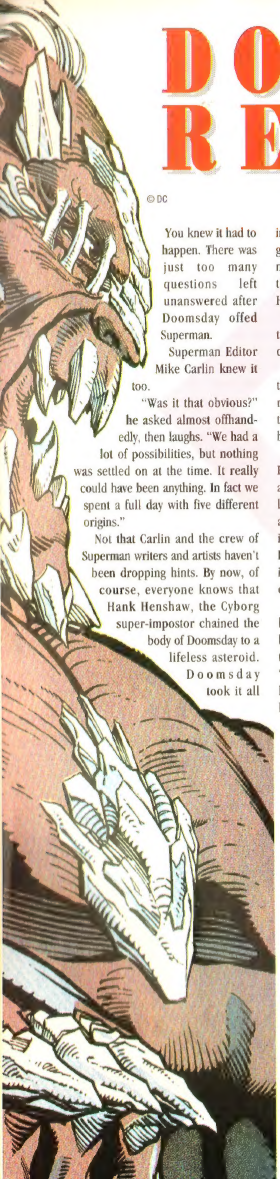
By Steve Fritz

DOOMSDAY RETURNS!



© DC

You knew it had to happen. There was just too many questions left unanswered after Doomsday offed Superman.

Superman Editor Mike Carlin knew it too.

"Was it that obvious?" he asked almost offhandedly, then laughs. "We had a lot of possibilities, but nothing was settled on at the time. It really could have been anything. In fact we spent a full day with five different origins."

Not that Carlin and the crew of Superman writers and artists haven't been dropping hints. By now, of course, everyone knows that Hank Henshaw, the Cyborg super-impostor chained the body of Doomsday to a lifeless asteroid. Doomsday took it all in as a big joke. Action #696 saw the one, true guy in blue fly by that very same asteroid belt, not knowing who's on the other side of one of the rocks (although we readers sure did). Heck of a way to end a comic, wasn't it?

"We wanted to remind people that he's still there and to tell our readers not to get too comfortable," says Carlin.

So here it comes, folks. Come April 12th, the whole roller-coaster ride begins again. Get ready for the next big confrontation between the Man of Steel and the villain who put the biggest chink of all in his armor.

The title is "Superman/Doomsday: Hunter/Prey." DC will be publishing this story as three free-standing Prestige format monthlies. Dan Jurgens and Brett Breeding are the artists on the job. As far as the comic industry is concerned, this and the upcoming Batman/Spawn (or Spawn/Batman...depending on which US coast your standing on) couldn't have come at a better time.

"Actually, I expect things to start getting busy when we come out with our Previews book featuring Superman and Doomsday on the cover," says Diamond's Dan Manser. "Then we expect a lot of calls about what DC has planned. There is anticipation, but everybody's waiting for the final word. It's the same thing with Batman/Spawn.

"A lot of retailers are looking forward to this and Batman/Spawn," adds Manser. "They (retailers) are in a bit of a cash crunch because of November and December being really slow. They see those two titles as bringing in the people they need to get the cash registers ringing again. If handled correctly, these two books will be great sell-throughs for them and put money back in their pockets."

For those who's memories are shorter than your average comic reader, the day Superman #75 (the issue the adopted son of Clark Kent literally bought the farm) came out, the lines for the comic were so huge that many comic stores had to close down, then reopen in order to handle the traffic. Not only did the old guard comic readers go crazy for the title, but a blitzkrieg of general media spurred literally hundreds of thousands of non-regulars to check out the comic. A number of these people became regular readers in the process, and the comic reading population increased by several hundred thousands. When the Reign of the Supermen started in Adventures #500, the ranks swelled again. The end result was that Superman #75, Adv. #500 and the four subsequent Superman titles were the top selling comics of 1992 and 1993. Some people think it might happen again.

"It depends on DC," says Manser. "In the past what they did with the death and return of Superman lines was take a very pro-active stance to those books. People didn't realize that killing Superman went right to the heart of the country. He's a true icon that everybody in the country is aware of. DC did a heck of a job of getting the general media involved and keeping them up to date. If they can do it again, then I'll expect a lot of excitement in the industry."

"It was thrilling and amazing at the same time," Carlin admits in retrospect. "I was proud to be a part of putting Superman back on top, where he belongs. For years (and it was years), I was embarrassed for Superman. When I worked for Marvel, on Dazzler, I was embarrassed that Dazzler sold more copies than Superman. To me, even though I was at Marvel, that was a horrible thing."

People forget that before the Doomsday arc, Superman was not selling anywhere near the numbers it used to. It's amazing to think that DC's prime mascot was barely holding on to a spot in the top 100 titles. Nowadays, he's back in the top Ten at all times. Still, the media circus that accompanied Supe's death caught just about everyone at DC off guard.

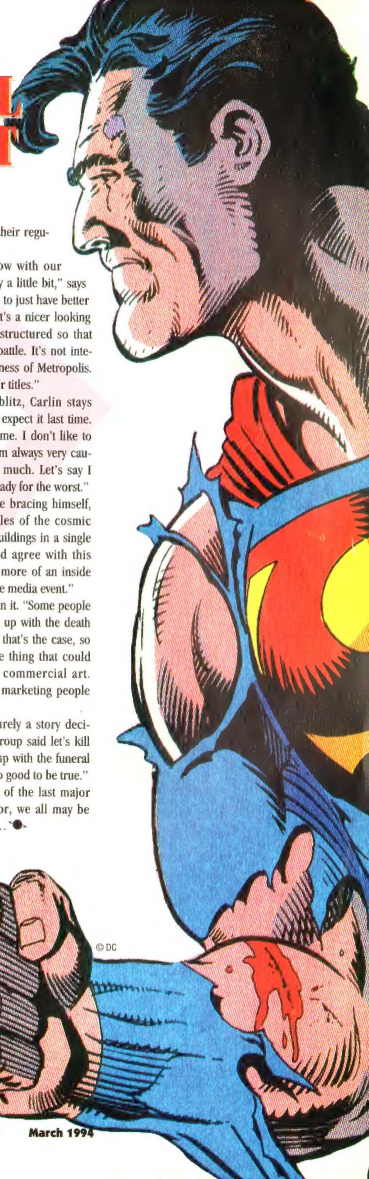
"Yes it did," Carlin concurs. "We didn't expect the real world to notice. Frankly, all we hoped to do was double our sales with the actual death issue itself. We didn't expect it to build to such a crescendo. We didn't expect it to go where it has. It's over a year now and we're still feeling it."

Feeling it to be sure... and in more ways than one. Not only have the four main Superman titles taken off, but three new titles were launched from the Reign arc... Steel, Superboy, and Supergirl. Admittedly the last is

By Steve Fritz

CBM FYI

SPECIAL REPORT



a mini-series, but it's sales are good enough that Carlin is hopeful. Still, the sales of the other two are also quite healthy.

"We're happy about that," says Carlin. "It still doesn't mean people really like them. What it means is people are curious about them. We won't call them a success until later this and the readers have decided whether we're a success or not."

Still, the amazing success of the Man of Steel's return has put on a lot of new baggage in the title. Carlin knows this.

"Yeah. I have added on a little weight since taking on this job… I won't allow myself to get bogged down with it either. I'm having a meeting next week to plan out another load of stuff. Quite honestly, we never start off the meetings saying we're at the top of the hill… we start off with what do we do to stay there! Actually, we start off by asking each other if anybody has any cool ideas. Has anybody figured out any cool twists and turns we can take? Are there things in the story line that we have to resolve? All the time, every time… It's purely story driven."

The story line that DC is "leaking" goes something like this: It's now a year later since Henshaw turned Coastal City into a cybernetic wasteland and a year of the Man of Steel's discovering what his new powers and capabilities are. That doesn't mean Superman isn't still haunted by death. He knows now that Doomsday is out there and he wants to find out why.

Superman then travels to space where he meets up with, in one form or another, the planet Apokolips, Waverider, and the still-evil cyborg Henshaw. Then there's the matter of Doomsday and his possible relationship to Darkseid…

"That's not what I said," Carlin interrupts. "You don't want me to give away the story, do you? I don't want to tell you the story. I mean I don't want to tell the readers the story. If there is a logical connection between Doomsday and Darkseid, you'll have to read it to find out. I will say though that a lot of people have speculated that is the case."

What Carlin will state though is that the three Prestige format books will be published concurrent to the four standard Superman titles, which will continue their regular printing cycle.

"We have the ability now with our success to expand the story a little bit," says Carlin. "The main reason is to just have better production values so that it's a nicer looking product all around. It is structured so that Superman goes off to the battle. It's not integral to the day to day business of Metropolis. That will be in the other four titles."

As for another media blitz, Carlin stays remarkably stoic. "I didn't expect it last time. So, I won't expect it this time. I don't like to set myself up for a fall. I am always very cautious about expecting too much. Let's say I hope for the best and am ready for the worst."

Manser seems to also be bracing himself, but also not expecting sales of the cosmic rematch to leap over tall buildings in a single bound. "I think DC would agree with this opinion and that is this is more of an inside comics event than an outside media event."

Carlin has his own take on it. "Some people have accused us of coming up with the death thing just to sell comics. If that's the case, so what? That's not the worse thing that could ever happen in a purely commercial art. Honestly, there aren't any marketing people around."

"What we're doing is purely a story decision. Every person in the group said let's kill Superman. Then we came up with the funeral story and we knew it was too good to be true."

Still, if the track record of the last major story arcs are any indicator, we all may be standing in line once again…

© DC

Something Borrowed, Something Grey...
X-Man takes an X-Wife!

X-Men #30 (Marvel Comics)
I feel almost idiotic to admit this in a public forum, but this book actually got me a bit misty-eyed. Like many comic fans, I've been following the romance of Jean Grey and Scott Summers since I was a small child. At long last we, the fans get to see two of our favorite characters joined in matrimony. Fabian Nicieza shows an incredibly sensitive touch in relating this most special of days in the history of Charles Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. If you're a Jean Grey and Scott Summers fan, this books got your number... especially when Jean's "dances" with Professor Xavier (?)!

Baker Street: Honour Among Punks (Caliber)
What if Holmes and Watson had been women? The question has been asked before... but what if they'd been punk women and intricately woven into the punk scene of London? Now that's a new twist on things! Guy Davis used this premise for his much-belated but critically acclaimed series **Baker Street.** This trade paperback reprints the first five issues of this series by the popular artist of **Sandman Mystery Theater**. Davis' intimate knowledge of both the punk scene and the Holmes mythos allows for a fascinating mystery book with an edge of individuality and anger seasoned with a dash of political intrigue and violence. This one is guaranteed to keep the reader on the edge of his seat.

The Jam: Urban Adventure #6 (Dark Horse Comics)
Okay... he wears a Sears jogging suit (modified to reflect his inner self), he jumps around on rooftops (with his dog, no less), and he works for a wacky old lady detective who has less than pure intentions toward him. Who is he? He's Gordon Kirby... the Jammer! Bernie Mireault has been weaving his tales of this non-super hero for several years and has finally found a home with Dark Horse Comics. This issue, Gordie agrees to be paid to be interviewed by a psychiatrist who could probably stand a few million hours of therapy himself. As has been the norm with this book, goofy Gordie remains the sane center of a very insane universe. All right already!!! Go out and buy the dang thing!

Strangers In Paradise #2 (Antarctic Press)
Francine gets dumped by her boyfriend and snaps. David, Francine's friend, really likes Katchoo, Francine's roommate. Unfortunately, Katchoo has it bad for her roommate, Francine. Soap opera? Yeah, but cartoonist Terry Moore does the job so well that it works. Not only is this more intelligent than most of the stuff you find on daytime TV, what Katchoo winds up doing to Francine's slimy ex-boyfriend makes it a heck of a lot funnier too! Thank you Terry, for one of those all too few comic books with realistic, intelligent women who are not superseded by improbable clothes and impossible bustlines. Too cool!

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by Nick Wyche

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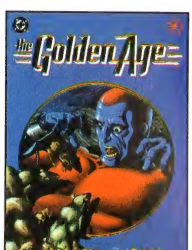

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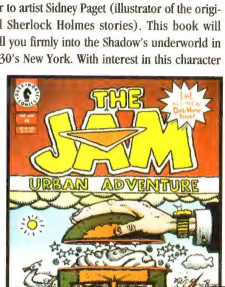
Sin Comics #1 (Black Eye Productions)
(Not pictured) How do you describe the indescribable? Jason Stephen's work looks sometimes as if it comes from a genius child and other times like it's from an incredibly hip comics old-timer. His stories from the Land Of Nod look like a children's comic gone terribly wrong but incredibly cool... and his Atomic City Tales revel in the super-hero genre while making something incredibly hip of it. The main character in the Atomic City stories is Big Bang, a former rock-n-roller who winds up with the "power to do anything" and, of course, wastes it on beer and dates. What super-hero wouldn't do the same thing? This crazy book is well worth the search.

Legion of Super-Heroes #54 (DC Comics)
The Legion goes underground and on the run from their own government... what is going on? Set-up by Universo, and made to look like traitors, the Legion has to go into disguise to find the proof of their innocence. New writer Tom McCraw and artists/co-plotters Stuart Immomen and Ron Boyd spent the last few issues (since #50) laying the groundwork for this story, and have kicked it off with a bang! Following it's recent history, DC is revitalizing yet another one of it's hallmark books.

The Shadow: Coils of the Leviathan #2 (Dark Horse Comics)
Mike Kaluta is back on the Shadow... but not as the artist! Now before a collective "aaaw shucks," Kaluta is *writing* the book! Mike is "pulling out all the stops" to craft a story set firmly within the milieu of the old pulp magazines that made the character famous. Artist Gary Gianni illustrates the series with a style similar to artist Sidney Paget (illustrator of the original Sherlock Holmes stories). This book will pull you firmly into the Shadow's underworld in 1930's New York. With interest in this character zooming because of the upcoming feature film, I'm betting this sucker will go through the roof!



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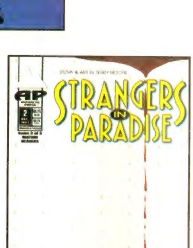
The Golden Age #3 (DC Comics)
I first mentioned this book back with it's #1 issue, and while it has been plagued by some lateness problems, the material on the inside is definitely worth the wait! I really don't want to give too much of this story away, but let's just say that if #1 made you jump, #3 is gonna make you hide in fear of what's coming next!



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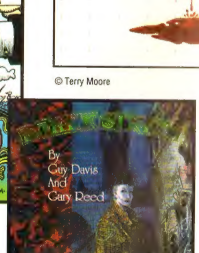

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RENEGAR REPORT

by Mike Renegar — *Keeping an eye on comics!* — Vol. I • No. 2 • Mar, 1994

New Spider-Man & Batman Cards Swing Into Spring

Marvel announced a plan to release a new *Spider-Man* 150-card set early this Spring. A preview of the set, which is produced by Mark Bagley, can be seen in any Marvel superhero comic with a March cover date. Each title will contain one of three different *Spider-Man* insert sheets: Spidey's Amazing Powers, Spidey Vs Venom, and Spidey and His Deadly Foes.

A Batman card set is also slated for Spring release. Skybox plans to release the new card set, titled "Batman: Saga of the Dark Knight," in early March. The set features a look at Batman "through the ages" and will contain artwork from past and present creators. Skybox says that the new Batman card set will also contain a "new technology" chase card that will, in their words, "take chase cards to the next level".

Charlemagne: New Comic "Veteran" from Defiant

Charlemagne, Defiant's newest title, will release in March and promises to take a look at modern and futuristic warfare. The story centers on a young man who, after some experiences in Vietnam, discovers that his destiny is to be Earth's super-powered champion. The fate of one of Defiant's most powerful heroes will be told by Phil Nutman and new comer Adam Pollina. Set your sights on this one!

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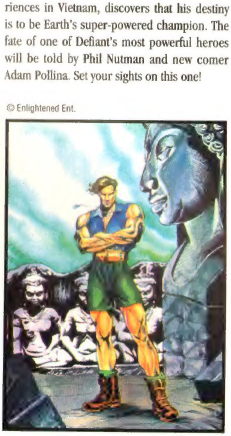

DID YOU KNOW...

...Swamp Thing #84 contains a Sandman Appearance? This issue also contains the fate of Matt Cable or should we say (Hint, Hint)...Matthew. Is this the origin of the Sandman's favorite feathered friend? Check it out!

© DC

The Ray Returns

Following its' success in 1992, The Ray will once again hit the stands in March. The new ongoing title will follow the adventures of Ray Terrill, heir to the Golden Age Ray. Both a "Collector's Edition" and a standard edition will be published, each featuring different cover art. Both covers will be penciled by Joe (The Man!) Quesada and the Collector's Edition will feature a multi-level embossed logo and cover art printed on gold foil. For those who missed it the first time around, a trade paperback collection of the first series is scheduled for release in late March and retail in the vicinity of $9.95.

K-Mart to Carry Comics

In November, K-Mart began testing a new comic book retail program which will offer newsstand comics in 1000 of its stores. K-mart will also be selling some back issues in the form of "multi-packs." K-Mart believes it will encourage the hobby by giving the books a larger range of distribution. The multi-packs contain older (6 months to a year) "left overs" from the Direct Market. This retail experiment may strengthen the market and bring new readers into the hobby, as well as increase sales in the Direct Market. The Batman blue-light special...cool!

Dark Horse Releases New Magazine

In response to the ever growing popularity of video games, Dark Horse plans to release a monthly comic book/video magazine in February. The 64-page, full color publication features new comic strips based on the video games Toejam & Earl, Lemmings, and Chuck Rock. The new monthly will be produced in a slick, oversized format that will contain news, features, reviews, and tips on the latest hot video games. Funky...

ZEN Creator To Sign With DNA Pen!!??

Zen's creator, Steve Stern, will make comic history at the New York Comic-Book Spectacular '94 when he signs autographs with a special DNA Gene Pen. The pen, developed by Art Guard Services of Los Angeles, uses the signer's actual DNA protein in the ink. "This process provides absolute and inimitable authentication of any signature," says its' inventor and Art Guard founder, Charles Butland. Among the company's current clients is Joe Barbera, of Hanna Barbera. Barbera uses the company to produce a "DNA fingerprint" to insure absolute authenticity on his animation (Flintstones) cels. Wow... and I thought the Kiss Magazine featuring "Real Kiss Blood" was amazing...

© Zen Comics Inc.

New Star Wars Cards to Hit Comic Market in "Force"

Luke... use another card binder." These just may be the next immortal words from the continuing Star Wars saga. Topps announced that the NEW Star Wars Galaxy series II trading cards will ship this April. The set will contain brand-new art work from industry giants like Jack Kirby, Jae Lee, Kelly Jones, Tim Truman, and John Bolton. "Fans will be treated to never before seen, newly commissioned drawings and paintings by comic greats, fan favorites, and exciting new-comers," says editor Gerani. The set will also contain new subsets and unpublished Star Wars poster art... plus never-before seen art from the Kenner Toy Company, the Lucasfilm archives, and private collections. Six all-new etched foil chase cards featuring Star Wars villains will also be included. Placed side by-side, with the series I chase cards and the 12 chase cards collectively form one giant, seamless mini-poster. The set will also contain 1,000 "winner" cards to receive auto-graphed cards from this set, and this series is limited to 10,000 12-box cases!

2,400 Bottles of Beer on the Wall!

Ale Yeah! Talk about your holiday cheer! Valiant labeled and "passed out" bottles of its complimentary brew ("Armstrong Ale") to selected retailers and business associates last year. Due to an overwhelming response (Hey, there's only 2,400), Publisher Steve Massarsky promises "more gift bottles in Valiant's future". Overstreet just "beerly" (groan) got one... Pass one down... Hic-up!

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Renegar's Required Reading:

Grendel War Child: Trade paperback
Dark Horse (Mature Readers)

I've read good stories before. I mean, I own two (yes... two) copies of Frank Miller's Batman: The Dark Knight TP, but this is intense! Matt Wagner is the master story teller! If you like action with a futuristic feel to it or just plain excitement, get this book! The TP collects the original 10 issue series with some new material and a Grendel gallery with artists like Kelly Jones, Art Adams and Tim Bradstreet. Hey, it also won the 1993 Eisner Award For Best Finite Series. Get it. Read it, Enjoy it...

S.T.A.T. #1
Majestic Entertainment

Have you ever read any book that surprised you? You know...You thought it would be okay, but you weren't expecting anything spectacular. Well, this is one such book! Talk about a cool story! The Government forms the group S.T.A.T. (Security Through Acquired Talents) to round up the "Lottery" winners (see, this "super hero mega god kinda guy" knows he's dying, so he has a lottery to give away some of his power- the winners receive various powers) and gives them a choice: join the group or get pounded into the ground! Fred Schiller should be commended for the excellent story line that has a human element rarely seen in "main-stream" books today. Phil Hester does some excel lent pencils and Paul Mounts' colors bring the characters to life. All in all, a great book. This is a prime example of the "quality" that publishers should strive to bring into this "quality" depressed market.

© Majestic Ent

© Matt Wagner

When and where were you born Jeff?
I was born in Keys Rocks, Pennsylvania in 1960.

What was your earliest experience with comic books?
My earliest experience with comics was in the Sunday papers. I also remember seeing the early Fawcett Peanuts collection in paper back. As for Comic books, I probably saw my first ones going to the drug store. I would have to ask for the comic box, and the person at the counter would pull it out and watch you while you would go through it. I remember there were Archies, Baby Huey by Harvey, and Disney stuff like Uncle Scrooge… stuff like that.

Which comics were your favorites back then?
I liked Gold Key comics… really strange stuff like the Banana Splits… titles like that.

Who do you feel is the greatest character and the greatest strip?
The best comic strip ever was Pogo… no question. And the best character is probably Albert the Alligator's rival Churchy. The Pogo characters are just so complex.

Then for comic books - I don't know if he's the greatest character ever created or not, but I was a big Batman fan… Especially during the late 60's early 70's when Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams were taking him back to his roots. That whole era of Batman (and the team of O'Neil and Adams) just blew my mind!

Which artists do you feel have influenced your personal style?
Walt Kelly had the biggest influence on me in terms of sensibilities. You know… making the characters talk with their own

Continued on page 16

Interview by Michael Naiman

Do you incorporate any of that into your own work?

I try to, with naturalistic poses. Even though the "Bones" are really elastic and cartoony in certain poses, I try to balance it out. When they run, they get really stretched out… Also when they run, their feet are two feet above the ground with the little shadow below them.

But when they aren't doing that, the characters are actually sitting there, like weights, firmly on the ground… or with their hand on the chair, or something like that.

Some fans have commented that your work looks almost like animation art.

There are some animation elements in my work, but they are probably different than most people think. What I brought from animation into comics was my line. In animation, you can't waste any drawings, especially in feature films, because there are 24 drawings a second for each character. If there's another character, you have to do another group of drawings on 24 separate pieces of paper that overlay the original. You don't want to do any extra drawings, you don't want to do a whole lot of hatch work, you don't want too many wrinkles in clothing, and you don't want to design a crazy uniform with hats with lots of points, because you've got to draw a lot more and with extra detail.

So I learned to be very concise and make my lines very clean. Clean specific lines in animation are very important, because if you don't do the line exactly the same every time, it will "shutter" when it's all filmed together. So my line work had to be real crisp.

My sense of storytelling did not come from my work with animation at all. Believe it or not, it came from reading strips like Doonsbury… or reading Pogo or Crazy Cat.

voices… making two characters have conversations that actually affected each other's speech! I also really liked Walt Kelly's line flow. Neal Adams had a huge affect on me too, and Dick Giordano… and Joe Kubert.

The way Joe Kubert would lay out a page had a huge affect on me. I remember really loving his Tarzans that he did for DC. It always amazed me the way Tarzan would just stand there while everything was going on all around him. He would just shift around from one foot to the other. Tarzan appeared totally relaxed… his muscles weren't even flexed. Kubert's drawing effects totally amazed me, they were so realistic. As a reader, they completely drew me into the story so that all my disbelief was gone… I was completely there.

Tarzan would be standing there talking, and seemingly for no reason at all (except to just excite me as a reader), Kubert would draw the next panel as if we were way up in the air looking down on the entire jungle basin. We could see the river, everything, including balloon indicators that Tarzan was over here by this river. It was just amazing layout work.

When did you start working in animation?

In 1986 I bought Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life, that real big coffee-table book by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnson. I read it and started up an animation company with a couple of buddies who had also read it. We were all self taught. We started doing commercial work locally… there was no other animation studio in Ohio at the time. My partners were incredibly talented, and we picked up a few other really talented younger animators who just joined in with us. We started doing national commercials and then started doing hire-out work from studios. We did one or two scenes in the movie "Fern Gully" just to help them out, but we still got film credit at the end. We did "Rover Dangerfield" (which was Rodney Dangerfield as a dog), and "Bebe's Kids." We did a lot on that.

I told Character Builders (the name of the company) to my partners when I wanted to start the Bone comic strip. They are still going strong, and are working on the new Betty Boop movie now.

Is there much difference in the development of a story line for animation and a story line for comic books?
Well, if you asked someone who has only worked in animation or someone who has only worked in comic books, they would probably tell you there is a difference. I personally don't see any difference. For me, both mediums use the same skills. I grew up watching Bugs Bunny, Mighty Mouse, and reading Pogo and Peanuts, and to me there is no difference. There are a few "tricks" to each one that are a little different, but the visual storytelling is the same… Really though, it's pretty much the same.

I noticed you change the pace a lot in Bone. Is that something you brought over from animation?
I think that's just storytelling in general. The reason roller coasters have ups and downs is because if you just went up there it wouldn't be that much fun. And if you just went down, well you can't go down without going up.

Frank Miller's Dark Knight and Batman: Year One was the first time I really saw real visual storytelling in comic books. It was the same kinds of things that movies have been using for a while, completely let loose. When Miller changed scenes, he would "cut" just like in a movie. He'd get to the last panel in the scene and then the next panel would start the next scene. He didn't have a little narrow box that said "Meanwhile," and "knew" he'd switched to the new scene, just like in a movie. Frank just decided that people could tell the change of scene without little helping captions, and he changed comics forever.

I don't know if he was the very first to use that approach, but it was the first time I'd seen it. When I did see it used, I thought "okay, you can do this in a comic book now."

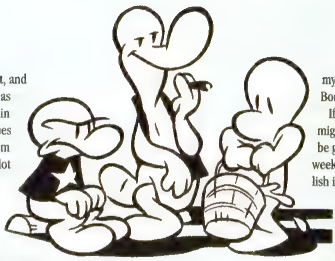
What was your first published comic book work?
Bone #1

Many in the industry were amazed by the fact that your self-published book took off so quickly. How did you decide to take the self-publishing route?
Well, when I got into self publishing, I already owned an animation studio with a lot of overhead and a lot of employees. I wasn't intimidated by the idea of owning a company… I knew how to get all the papers filed and all that kind of stuff. So the idea of starting a publishing company wasn't really that big of a deal to me.

Wasn't Bone originally published as a strip in your college paper?
Yes… in the "Ohio State Lantern" which had a circulation of about 50,000. I drew it every day for 4 years, from about '82 till about '86.

Did anyone offer to publish the strip outside the academic community?
A few newspaper syndicates expressed some interest in the strip.

You mentioned in a previous conversation that the Bone comic was allowing you to "start the strip over."
In the strip, I took all the characters and started creating this universe. I wrote the story as I went along. After 4 years I knew what the story was. I didn't really know what it was when I started, but by the time I did the comic book, I knew the story. In fact, the story has gone a lot further in the comic book than it did in the four years I was in college… I've even written the ending. Since I know what the story is, I was able to go back and use only the gags out of the newspaper materi



...t people liked and laughed at, and ...n all of the rest. The comic has ...owed me to sort of "start over" in ... more and really pepper little clues ...rough the Bone comics right from ...e very first issue. I also put in a lot ... little hints and clues about the ...ng story"... things that won't ...me out until a lot later.

...e Bone comic book an ...expansion" of the Bone college news-...per strip?

...ll the characters were there, Thorn was ...ver, Grandma Ben, the Dragon... but ...iley Bone wasn't there. I made up the ...one cousins when I was in kindergarten, ...nd all three of them (Fone Bone, Smiley ...one, and Phoney Bone) were there. .

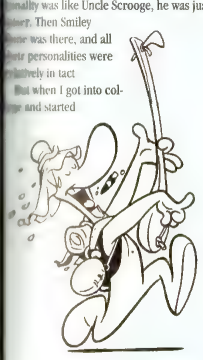
...ow did you come to create the origi-...al Bone character?

...remember sitting there in my living room at ...e age of five, doing nothing more than con-...mplating the color of the carpet and the ...ece of paper I did it on. I was just trying to ...ake up something fun like Mickey Mouse ...r Bugs Bunny and I just drew it. I remember ...ally liking this drawing I had just made and ...inking "That's going to be my character." ...nd, of course, when you're five, that's a big ...eal.

...n the second grade I used to draw little ...ories with Bone characters... they lived in ...owerville and it was just like Duckburg.

...ne day, a friend of mine drew a little anti-...one Bone character. Then a Phoney Bone ...th a star on his chest. Back then, his per-...nality was like Uncle Scrooge, he was just a ...ster. Then Smiley ...one was there, and all ...eir personalities were ...ctively in tact

...But when I got into col-...ge and started playing with them, their personalities really started taking over and Phoney Bone became much crankier, much more egotistical. Even more than Uncle Scrooge. He was like Uncle Duke gone bad if you can imagine that.



Where did Smiley come from?

He was there in the beginning. He may have started from a simple drawing of Fone bone that went a little haywire or something.

You somehow manage to combine both "human" types and "cartoon" types in the same strip.

I do that because I like to draw humans too. I actually have three distinct styles.

First is a truly realistic style that is not used in Bone at all. Second is a "pseudo-realistic" style I use on the "humans" in the Bone strip. I had to make them a little more like cartoon characters, just so that they wouldn't clash with the Bones. I did it because I wanted to draw humans... I wanted to draw scary monsters and shadows... I like realistic details like wrinkles in clothing etc.... and I like to draw people. Somehow it turned out to be an interesting dynamic between the humans and the Bones and created some good things for me to work with both story-wise and visually. I didn't do that on purpose. It just happened because I enjoyed drawing humans in with the Bones.

Oh... and third is the "cartoony" style of the Bone characters

Has self publishing been challenging?

Yes... but the best part is happening now. I've come through some really hard times and now Bone is being bought and enjoyed by people and has gotten some positive notoriety. And the best part about it is that I still own the characters and still have creative control over them and over the product. I get to continue selling Bone #1. Even if I went to a really creator friendly company who'd let me keep my characters, they'd still want control of Bone #1.

If Bone #1 went out on the racks... It might be out for three weeks and then could be gone. Whatever I made from those three weeks of sales would be it. Since I self-publish it, I can keep putting it out there periodically and I can keep making a living from that same book. There are other aspects of creative control that even a friendly publisher wouldn't give me.

The challenging part has to be the difficulty of getting my book out there. Especially coming into the industry brand new like I did. It seemed especially tough trying to get people to give me a chance, just trying to get people to read it was really difficult.

What I did to try and get the book out was to go to distributor and retailer trade shows, and show the books to people. I would get booths at these things and try to stand out from the crowd. I sent my books off for review and fortunately they got a number of positive reviews from people. I lucked out that way I guess.

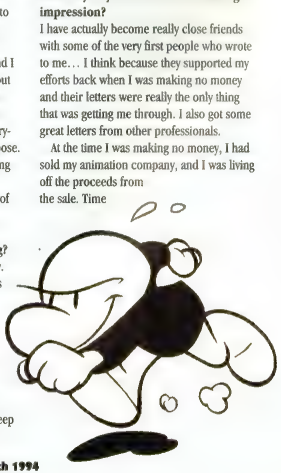
How do you feel about the explosion of professional recognition in recent months?

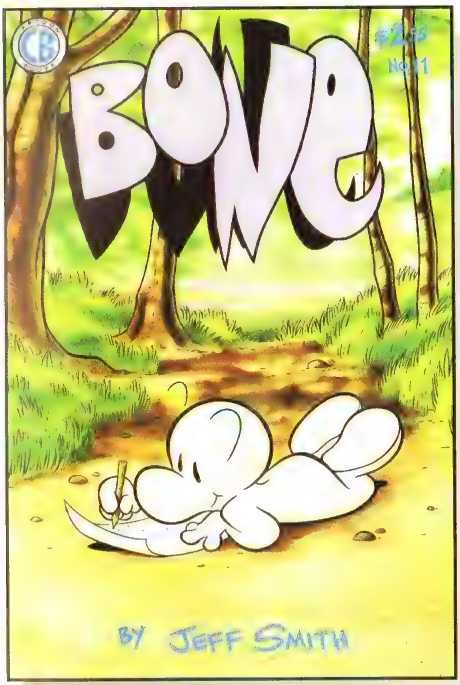
I have no explanation for why people are liking them. I'm just glad.

Have any of your fans made a lasting impression?

I have actually become really close friends with some of the very first people who wrote to me... I think because they supported my efforts back when I was making no money and their letters were really the only thing that was getting me through. I also got some great letters from other professionals.

At the time I was making no money, I had sold my animation company, and I was living off the proceeds from the sale. Time





was running out and my wife and I were wondering "should we stick with this?" It was those early letters of encouragement that made me think "well, maybe there is something here… I'll keep going a little bit further with this."

You said earlier that you really enjoyed the '93 San Diego Con. What about it made it such a positive experience?
You name it. It was the best comic book convention I'd ever been to. I mean everything was good… I met so many people… people were coming over to the table that really wanted to see the books… everything about it was positive. Getting both the Eisner Award and the Russ Manning Newcomers Award at the Inkpot Awards Banquet was wonderful too.

Were you surprised about the awards?
Completely! I didn't even know I was nominated. In fact, it was near the end of the week and I was so exhausted I was just too tired to go to the Awards Banquet. All I wanted to do was go back to my room and have a nice little coma.

But Dave Sim and Coleen Duran (two other self publishers who are friends of mine), pretty much forced me to go. They talked me into it by saying "You have to go… it's the Inkpots… everybody goes."

So I went, and I was exhausted, and of course it's the very first award of the night, so it was like POW! They call out my name, I walk up to the front of this room full of comic VIPs, and they have this screen 20 feet tall with a page of my art work on it. It was incredible!

Can you tell us about some upcoming projects?
Well, I'm going to dedicate myself to Bone, as far as comic books go. I do have a couple other cartoon related projects in mind, but I won't be starting them for a couple of years or so. I'm going to really concentrate on Bone for now. Bone ancillary material… merchandising… things like that. I've been talking to a great many people… all sorts of agents and others who want to merchandise Bone. It's really exciting.

Have any animation studios suggested a Bone cartoon?
Yes, I've actually had some very serious discussions, but they usually end up where the studio wants to own the property, and I will never sell.

Do you have any plans to return to animation yourself?
I love animation, but the business was very difficult. I have a lot of respect for the guys who do it, especially the TV animation guys. Some of these operations are located all over the world, and the coordination headache must be unbelievable. When (and if) I ever do a Bone animated feature, I will be involved with it somehow. That's because I love the industry and I feel I know the industry. I'd love to get all the good people together working on it.

Which do you find more difficult… drawing or writing?
To me, they are the same process. When I write, I do it in words and pictures. I might sit down and do an 8 point outline, somewhat like a storyboard in animation… basically a words and pictures rough draft.

I take a page and do the layouts of the panels and actually write in the words with a little doodle to show me where the character is going to stand and what his body language is going to be. When I go back later, I can refer to it.

During the process, I can even "agonize" over something as seemingly insignificant as the position of a word balloon. A joke can be funny… but maybe it can be funnier if I move the balloon over a little. I take into account whether or not the balloon is surrounded entirely by air or if it's touching the edge of the panel. That kinda of thing is both visual and part of the writing process. Decisions about little details can cause some real sweat on the brow.

Sometimes it's actually funnier to have nothing happen (like Gary Treadeau does sometimes), where the characters are seen in panel after panel in the same position. When you draw it that way, the emphasis is going to be on the words and maybe just a few subtle

expression changes. The other approach (which I use sometimes) is wild slapstick where the characters are just flying all around... stretching or jumping all over the panels.

It just shows how connected the writing and drawing can be.

How long does it take to produce one Bone comic book?

I can do it in four weeks, although one particular issue took me three months to do.

What is the inspiration for your characters?

As they stayed with me over the years, each one became one part of my personality. Phoney Bone is cranky, Fone Bone is the good little guy, and Smiley is emerging as almost amoral. He can swing with any situation.

I don't know where The dragon comes from. He says things sometimes that I wouldn't even think of saying, but they seem pretty cool. Thorn is based, in large part, on my wife, or at least her body language.

Believe it or not, the only character who is actually based on a real person is Grandma Ben. She is probably the strangest character in the whole book. I met this elderly woman who owned a farm and raised steers. She was a feisty old lady who wore Adidas tennis shoes. If she saw the livestock was loose, she'd throw open the gate and go tearing off across the field, hollering at them all the way. I thought "man, that lady is going to have a stroke," but she never did. She just ran right over and bossed those bulls around. She was actually the grandmother of someone I was dating back in high school... I never kept in touch really. (Laughter) I liked her grandmother though.

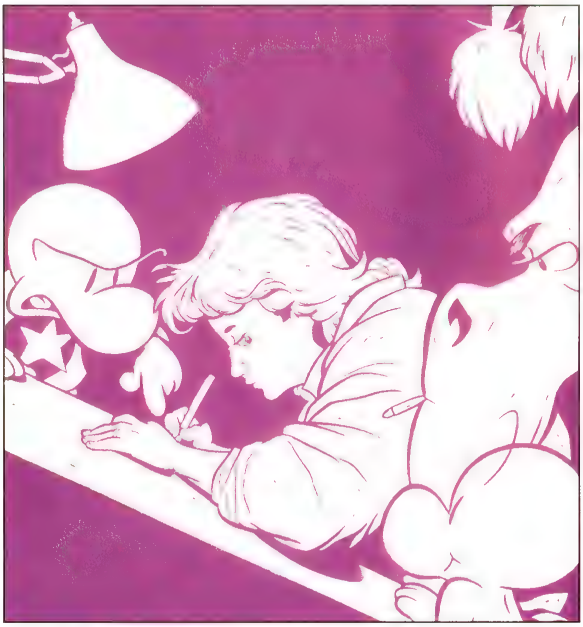
One more question Jeff. Does this Bone adventure have an ending?

The Bone adventure in the valley has an ending. In fact the last 3 issues are actually completed.

As for the total number of issues that will make up the story... I have absolutely no idea, but I do have a vague outline. When I started, I knew basically what the beginning and the ending was, and I know there are about 5 major episodes that I want to tell. Other than that, it is completely wide open. There is plenty of room for all sorts of other adventures. I imagine it taking anywhere between 5 and 10 years to tell the story... I'm just getting Started!

Thanks for a great interview Jeff.

Thank you! It was fun... thanks for making it painless!



STAR WARS COLLECTIBLES: THE COMIC BOOK SAGA

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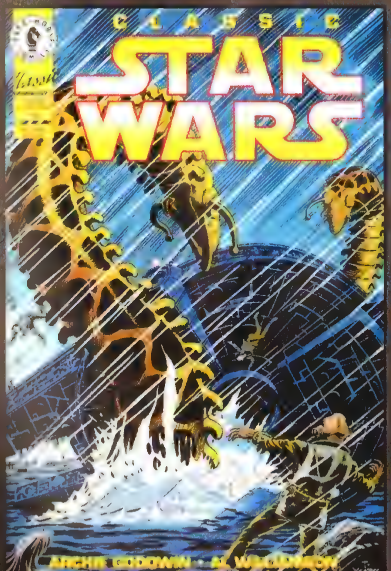


by Glenn Harveston

Collecting Star Wars related items have become an often profitable obsession with many fans during the last decade. From toys to picnic supplies to household products to comics... there seems to be no end to the realm of merchandise that comes from that "galaxy far, far away.

Along with the increase in the number of Star Wars items, there has also been an almost "astronomical" increase in popularity, demand and prices. Whether this "explosion" of interest is being caused by George Lucas' news of the future release of the second Star Wars trilogy or residual interest in the first one, today seems likely a dramatic increase in price on all of these products is sure to follow.

Many new and old fans alike could be left "out in the cold" purely as a function of simple economics. Across the average collectors who are either unable (or unwilling) to pay $350 for a 12" Han Solo figure in mint condition, actively search for the next "potentially hot" Star Wars item. What's left for the rest of us? Without a doubt, many think the best buy for Stars Wars collectibles is comic books.

Park Lane Comics currently own the rights to produce Star Wars comics. In 1992, they released a 6 issue limited series called *Star Wars: Dark Empire*.

The grim tale of Luke Skywalker exploring the dark side of the Force was a smash hit with both critics and fans. Tom Veitch successfully brought back the classic characters in a great story. This was evident as the law of supply and demand quickly took over and left many collectors with lighter wallets. This is evident today with issue #1 fetching prices up to $50. The 2nd issue had a low print run and goes for even more. However, beware of those pesky second prints... they can be deceiving...

Dark Horse also published a 3-part story in *Dark Horse Comics* #7-9 the same year. This is the original "Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi." It is the tale of Nomi who is reluctantly cast into the role of a Jedi Knight. Many readers missed out on this anthology title because of limited sales. The problem most collectors have is finding issue #8. This is the second part of the Star Wars storyline, but also marks the first appearance of "X" from Comics Greatest World. "X" has gone on to become a star and now has his own series. Popularity and speculation related to "X" led to massive buying of this book at low cost. Now, the book commands $10. Between "Star Wars" and "X", Dark Horse Comics #8 has disappeared. This has left many folks scrambling to find it "before it goes up even more in value." Issue #9 also contains both stories, a factor which has contributed to a number of dealers predicting the price will rise.

"Classic Star Wars" began in 1992 as well. This book reprints the Los Angeles Times Syndicate daily newspaper strip that began on March 11, 1979. New art has been added to enhance Archie Goodwin's story. The news strip only lasted 5 years and was not widely seen. This is an ongoing series and can still be picked up for cover price making this book worth checking out.

The saga continues in a recent 5 issue limited series: "Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi." This story is set in the days before the Clone Wars. Issue #1 was reported to be an instant sellout in most areas of the country. Issue #3 reprints the 3-part story in Dark Horse Comics #7-9. Issue #4 continues Nomi's adventure with a new story. Speculation associated with the upcoming movie and "Dark Empire's" success may be the factor behind the quick movement in these books as well as Veitch's storyline and Dave Dorman's beautiful covers. "Dark Horse Comics" will also begin a new storyline in May entitled "Droids." Take a guess who the focus will be on. You guessed it... R2D2 and C3PO.

The TRUE test of collecting Star Wars comics begins and ends with Marvel's run of 107 issues and 3 annuals. Roy Thomas, former editor and writer at Marvel, struck a deal with George Lucas Enterprises to adapt the film. Unique about the adaptation was issue #2, where

Jabba the Hutt is pictured on the bottom of page 22. He has two legs, whiskers, and weighs less than the slug we all know and love from the "Return of the Jedi."

A few highlights from the series include: Issue #18 featured a cover with the title "The Empire Strikes." This was a year *before* the release of the second film. Issue #24 contained a tale of Obi-Wan Kenobi in the early days of the Republic. The adaptation of the "The Empire Strikes Back" was presented in issue's #39-44.

True fans may wish to check out issue #78. In it, the creators "goofed" and told the story of Wedge Antilles' friendship with Luke in Beggar's Canyon. We all know that it was Biggs Darklighter instead. Issue #81 picks up where "Return of the Jedi" left off, and reveals that Boba Fett has escaped from the clutches of the Sarlaac. The series concluded with issue #107 and gave us our first look at Whilce Portacio's first work on comics (he served as inker).

There are also several other releases that some may not be aware of. For example, Marvel UK released a one-shot book and Marvel Showcase reprinted the first issue of the ongoing series. There was also a Marvel four issue mini-series adaptation of "Return of the Jedi." Dark Horse released a three book UK edition. Finally, Blackthorne Publishing put out "Star Wars 3-D"

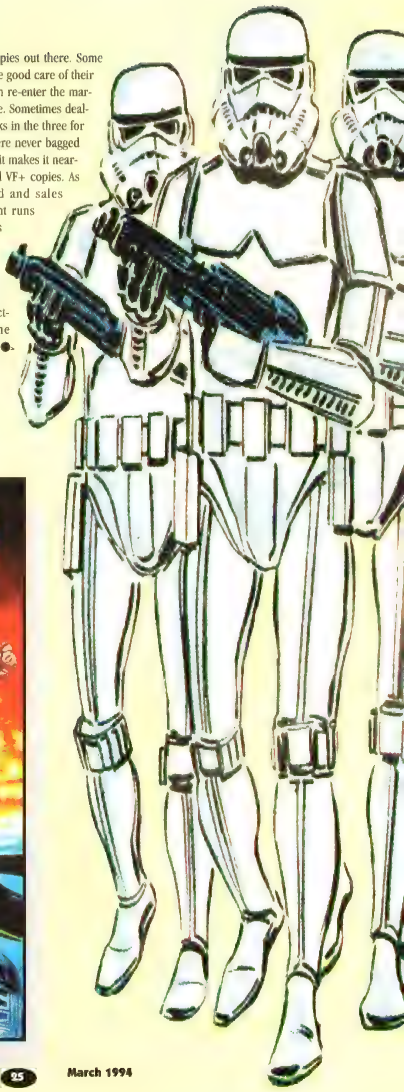
complete with 3-D glasses. This is considered by some collectors as one of the rarest Star Wars books to find.

Many collectors ask," Why bother collecting this Marvel series when it hasn't increased in price in years?" There are three main factors that answer this question. First, it's cheap, DAMN CHEAP. The first issue only costs $18. That is relatively inexpensive when compared to the "Dark Empire" books. Some suggest that this is one of the most underrated books to the market. Also, look for the 35 cent edition with the UPC code. Very limited distribution has caused this book to soar to $350.

Second, It's possible that the value will increase when the publicity about the movie begins. And third, the joy of the hunt is part of what collecting is all about. How many people do you know with an entire set of the Marvel series?

Collecting the Marvel Star Wars run presents a few challenges. Even though most of the books cost a mere $1, the large numbers of books do add up. Also, there just aren't that many high grade copies out there. Some collectors didn't take good care of their books and they often re-enter the market in "rotten" shape. Sometimes dealers threw these books in the three for dollar boxes and were never bagged and boarded. Thus, it makes it nearly impossible to find VF+ copies. As the run continued and sales decreased, the print runs also decreased. This contributes to the difficulty finding nice copies of issues #90-107.

Good luck collecting and "May the Force be with you."●



25 GREAT COMICS
That Don't Cost a Lot of Gold!

One of the most common explanations heard for the relatively high ($10-$50 or more) prices of hot new comics is that "old comics are too expensive for the average collector". Yet if one looks closely, there are numerous key, desirable comics that guide for moderate prices.

For the past several installments, this column has focused on 70's comics. This time, let's turn back the clock ten more years and look at a selection of comics that all guide for a remarkable $50 or less in Near Mint.

Please note that the NM price is listed as a convenience - finding 30 year old comics in NM is another matter entirely. But if you keep in mind that half the fun of collecting is the thrill of the hunt... and that you can upgrade a lesser grade copy should the opportunity presents itself... then all of the books listed below become even more interesting and just might make great additions to your collection. Happy hunting!

1. **Action Comics #258** (DC, Feb 1962) Listed as the "12th Legion app.", but who cares?! One look at the cover tells you that this book is about Supergirl. Introduced in Action #252. Supergirl's existence is kept a secret while she learns to use her powers. In this milestone issue she is revealed to the world for the first time. A great book... and yes, the LSH does make their 12th appearance as well. Only $50.

2. **America's Best TV Comics** (ABC, 1967) Based on ABC's popular 1967 Saturday morning cartoon line-up, this 68 page one shot has a new ten page Fantastic Four story by Lee & Kirby, and a new ten page Spider-Man story by Lee & Romita. The book's amazing mix also features King Kong, George of the Jungle (Jay Ward), Journey to the Center of the Earth, and Casper... all for the bargain basement price of $40.

3. **Avengers #57** (Marvel, Oct 1968) First appearance of the Vision, vastly under-rated and under-valued at $45.

4. **Batman #213** (DC, Jul/Aug 1969) A very hard to find Giant Size issue that tells the origin of Robin for "the first time...with all the details". A wise investment of $32.

5. **Beware the Creeper #1** (DC, May/Jun 1968) Now that he is dead (torn to pieces by Eclipso hyenas in Eclipso #13), perhaps Ditko's 1968 creation will get the attention he deserves. Cheap at $40.

6. **Brave and the Bold #61 & #62** (DC, Aug-Nov 1965) These were covered in detail by Ray Connell in OCBM #9, so I will just note #61 has an incredible cover and #62 is the first SA Wildcat. Only $50 each.

7. **Detective Comics #327** (DC, May 1964) First "New Look" Batman, which more importantly signaled the end of the "Bug Eyed Monster of the Month" era and a return to the "World's Greatest Detective". Vastly undervalued at $40 and impossible to find as a result.

8. **Detective Comics #359** (DC, May 1964) First appearance of the modern day Batgirl. A Steal at $30.

9. **Doctor Solar #5** (Gold Key, Sep 1963) First appearance of Doctor Solar as a costumed superhero. This book is ridiculously undervalued at $50.

10. **Dynamo #1** (Tower, Aug 1966) With a new line of Thunder Agent comics due out in the Summer, this may be your last chance to own these beautiful books at reasonable prices. Dynamo, the most popular Thunder Agent, guides for a mere $40. I guess I'm "cheating" to mention it, but Tower's flagship title, Thunder Agents, is an astonishing low $65.

11. **Fantastic Four #45** (Marvel, Dec 1965) First appearance of the Inhumans, a classic Lee/Kirby creation that is woefully overlooked and undervalued at $38.

12. **Hawk and the Dove #1** (DC, Jan 1968) Definitely not your regular superhero comic. One of Ditko's best and only $35.

13. **Flash Gordon #1** (King, Sep 1966) King Features re-entered the comic book market in 1966, bringing with them their well established comic strip heroes and some of the best artists in the field. Well worth $18.

14. **Huey, Dewey and Louie, Junior Woodchucks #1** (Gold Key, Aug 1966) Thanks to the cartoon series Ducktales, millions of people know about the Woodchucks. Title ran 18 years, a true bargain at $21.

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF THE ONE AND ONLY ORIGINAL
PLASTIC MAN
BRAND-NEW EXPLOITS OF THE FAMOUS HUMAN RUBBERBAND, THE SLYEST, SLIPPERY-EST, SLINKY-EST SUPER-HERO OF THEM ALL!
© DC

By Tony Starks

© MEG

15. **Justice League of America #46** (DC, Aug 1966) First appearance of the Silver Age Sandman. Same price as the 1989 version - $45.

16. **Korak, Son of Tarzan #1** (Gold Key, Jan 1964) Russ Manning art, gorgeous painted covers - a lot of book for $35.

17. **Mandrake the Magician #1** (King, Sep 1966) See description for Flash Gordon. Far too cheap at $22.

18. **Mighty Samson #1** (Gold Key, Jul 1964) Sort of a Kamandi with muscles. Mucho undervalued, expect to pay 2x guide, which is still cheap, since the book guides for a paltry $25.

19. **Nick Fury, Agent of Shield** (Marvel, Jun 1968) Every other 1968 Marvel 1st issue goes for $100 or more. Breath taking Steranko art. A steal at $40.

20. **Not Brand Echh #1** (Marvel, Aug 1967) Marvel's parody mag remains a fun read, with spoofs like Stuporman, Inedible Bulk and Magnut, Robot Biter. Just $25.

21. **Phantom Stranger #1** (DC, May/Jun 1969) A nice change of pace from standard superhero fare and the entire series is worth collecting. Value priced at $40.

22. **Plastic Man #1** (DC, Nov/Dec 1966) First DC Silver Age appearance of the original Plastic Man - House of Secrets #160 is a Robby Reed tryout. Some of the best sight gags in comics for only $45.

23. **Sarge Steel #1** (Charlton, Dec 1964) Alive and well in the DC universe, Sarge Steel's first issue is a paltry $10.

24. **Superboy #98** (DC, Jul 1962) Hmm. Ultra Boy is nearly as powerful as Monel and came out about the same time (Monel appeared one year earlier in Superboy #89). Monel's first appearance guides for $140; Ultra Boy's first appearance is an incredible $30!

25. **Wild, Wild West #1** (Gold Key, Jun 1966) Based on the popular TV show that still pops up on cable. If you like Fox's Briscoe County Jr., you will love Wild, Wild West. Only $45.

© DC

TOY TALK™

A NEW PRICE GUIDE FEATURE FROM OVERSTREET

New Invisible Woman To "Appear" on Shelves

If you missed her the first time, you'll get a second chance to own the rare Invisible Four Female Figure. Marvel/Toy Biz will release Sue, along with several new figures, early this Spring. What will some of the figures be? The series will include: Daredevil in his new costume (Cool!, although it's the same basic figure as the previous Daredevil) S.S. Agent (used to be a Captain America figure), and a new Punisher complete with trench coat. There will also be a re-release of Iceman ("blue-ish" color), Nightcrawler, Storm (New look and colors), Magneto (New color on wrist and ankles), and many others. Other new figures for the year include: Professor X, Longshot, Ahab, and The Brood.

Playmates To Release "Seaquest" Action Figures

Playmates does it again! Due to ship in the Spring, the Seaquest figures (from the popular TV series of the same name) are sure to be a hit. You'll get to choose from Captain Nathan Hale Bridger, Lucas (doesn't he seem a bit like Wesley Crusher …hmm…), Darwin the porpoise, and a ton of others. Hey, wait a minute! Isn't Darwin some kinda fish? What a cool figure Darwin will be… maybe he will come with a bucket of fish? Or a net? (ha ha ha…)

The Seaquest figures from Playmates will be limited and numbered, and will look similar to the Playmates' Star Trek: The Next Generation figures. And speaking of ST:TNG…

New "Star Trek: The Next Generation" Figures Arrive In March

Just when you thought your collection was complete… Wham! All new Playmates' Star Trek: The Next Generation figures hit the shelves in March. The new figures will include Lt. Barclay, Hugh the Borg, Geordi as an alien, and Riker as a Malcorian. The figures will contain new "galactic gear" and special in-pack premiums. Check 'em out!

The Rare List: Top 5

1. Invisible Woman
2. Storm
3. Daredevil
4. Nightcrawler
5. Iceman

MARKET REPORTS

DAVE GRISEZ
San Diego Comics and Collectibles
6937 El Cajon Blvd
San Diego, CA 92115
(619) 698-1177

Welcome to my first toy market report and a big thanks to the Overstreet team for allowing me the opportunity to contribute! For the most part our store tries to focus our toy and action figures towards the comic book market. However, older toys that are just too neat to pass up, often find their place upon our shelves, so nothing is really too obscure or old for our tastes. Recent acquisitions in the odd-ball category are Super Rotate-a-Matic Robot (Japanese tin circa early '60s), Monkees' Mike Nesmith flicker ring, and a Charlie McCarthy Pencil Sharpener.

What sells big for us? Star Wars. If it is a Star Wars toy and is fairly priced, it goes quickly. We are always needing to update our inventory to meet the demand, and on many items there is a ready customer waiting for it's arrival. Recent Sales: Sy Snootles and his Rebo Band (MIB) $70; Darth Vader (CNP-complete no package) $20; C3PO Carrying Case (CNP) $15; Chewbacca figure with carry pouch $15. I do not believe any current guides correctly interpret where the market is heading with the Star Wars line, but I will tell you which way it is heading — UP!

Disneyana also sells well and it seems that everyone has their favorite Disney character that is the focus of their collecting interests. Any Uncle Scrooge items do not last for more than 24 hours here — hard to believe — but true!! Tough to get but easy to sell is '60s and older material. Recent Sales: Snow White Record Set (1948 fair condition) $25; Marching

Mickey (UNP) $25; Donald and Mickey Christmas Light Bulbs circa 1960 $5 each.

Fast food toys that feature comic book characters do very well in this area of the country. Particularly hot right now are the Batman animated series toys that are McDonalds giveaways. Mint in Bag (MIB) they go for $3 each. The Snow White figures that came out last Summer have cooled slightly but the Queen/Witch is still an easy sell at $5 (MIB). We could sell the Teeter-totter Dwarfs at $7.50 if we could find them!

Slurpee cups featuring Marvel and DC characters go for $3.50-$5 each when the condition is excellent. These little gems are getting harder to obtain because they do not store easily and they yellow and crack when exposed to light. Legion cups seem to sell the best when available.

We usually do not stock any of the current action figure toys due to the easy availability of our customer base to the mega toy stores (which we cannot compete with). We do however keep current with the market trends in this area and find that the best selling toys are the X-Men action figures, Star Trek micro machines, Star Wars freebies (no surprise), and the Batman animated series action figures. Check out the Mech-Wing Batman with Mechanized Soaring Wings for a high demand item! Bat Alert — I feel picking up the BATTL vehicle die casts is a good idea...while you can. My sources say they will not be out on the market for much longer and they are still selling cheap where available.

I hope that this report was as much fun to read as it was for me to write. If you are in the San Diego area — drop by and take a look. Till next time — toys aren't just for kids!

JAMES BULLOCK
150 Heller Drive
Oakes Box 166
UCSC Santa Cruz, CA 95064
(408) 459-6849

Christmas is, by far, the best time of year for toy collecting. It is the time when parents purchase mass quantities of action figures for their kids and toy collectors find themselves standing in the aisles of their nearest toy store waiting for the employees to restock the shelves. Thus, a new box is opened and the really difficult to find stuff is put out, ripe for the picking. A close friend of mine has this practice to thank for his newly acquired Invisible Woman! Yes, they are still out there, in most cases still in an unopened box at the bottom of a stack. Although it may seem futile, keep an eye out.

Older Toys - Mego: Still hottest are the Teen Titans, (no surprise) especially Speedy. Thor is also hot! I witnessed one sell for $400 mint in a VF box. The female figures also continue to be great, especially Supergirl on the card which is incredibly rare. The more affordable figures are starting to show some movement, including Spider-Man and the Human Torch on the card approaching the $50 range. These are not hard to find. Loose figures tend to be dead unless priced very reasonably.

Star Wars - Incredibly in demand! The hottest figures tend to be the Power of the Force line. I've yet to own a Yak Face, on the card or Loose!

Loose Figures - Which brings me to another point... loose figures (Star Wars only) have experienced an unsurpassed surge in demand. No longer do dealers need to dump all 5,097,811 of their loose figures into a box next to their tables with a sign saying "$4 each or 3 for $10". I recently sold an Early Bird version of Chewbacca with the green crossbow for $60! This was, you understand, my starting price, but the collector gladly met it.

Warning - A kid came up to me and tried to sell me a loose Jawa with a plastic cape which he had bought at another convention for $40, a seemingly low price. It turned out that the cape had been removed from another figure, probably Ben Kenobi, then cut to Jawa size. Take a good long look before buying loose variations.

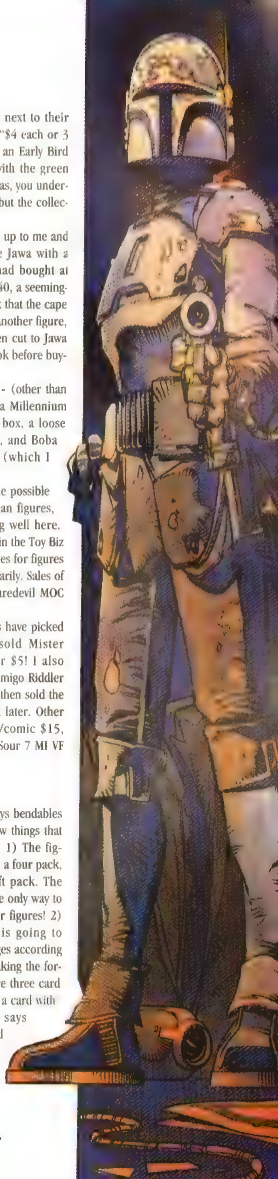
Recent Acquisitions - (other than a "capeless" Jawa) are a Millennium Falcon in the Star Wars box, a loose radio controlled R2-D2, and Boba Fett on a Droids card (which I resold within an hour)

Secret Wars - With the possible exception of the European figures, Secret Wars is not doing well here. Most would rather invest in the Toy Biz figures than pay high prices for figures that have peaked, temporarily. Sales of note: Red Spidey and Daredevil MOC for $20 each.

Super Powers - Sales have picked up a bit. I recently sold Mister Miracle's handcuffs for $5! I also recently traded a Super Amigo Riddler MOC for a loose Cyborg, then sold the Cyborg for $100 a week later. Other sales: Dr. Fate loose w/comic $15, Darkseid MOC $10, Lex Sour 7 MI VF Box for $13.

NEWER TOYS

Star Wars - The Justoys bendables are great! There are a few things that collectors should know. 1) The figures are sold on cards, in a four pack, and in a eight piece gift pack. The eight piece gift pack is the only way to get the Ewok or Emperor figures! 2) The eight piece pack is going to undergo packaging changes according to the grapevine, thus making the former scarcer. 3) There are three card variations: the first is just a card with a figure, the second says "Limited Edition" and comes with a Star Wars Galaxy card. The writing of the figure's



name on these cards is distinctly smaller than that of the other two. The third variation says "Limited Edition Trading Card" and the writing of the name is normal. My experiences have shown that the second version is by far the rarest. I have purchased every one which I have come across and still I only have ten or so figures. 4) Princess Leah is the hardest to find on any card. 5) The four pack comes with and without four cards enclosed. Neither appears to be scarcer. 6) There is an Obi Wan Kenobi figure not shown on the card backs. I recommend these toys to everyone!!! Not only are they fun to play with, but I believe that they will be highly sought after by those who miss the boat.

Star Trek - With the exception of Geordi LaForge with removable Visor, all figures can still be found at toy stores. I recommend not paying more than $6 for these figures unless the serial number is below 1,000. Most below 1,000 sell for $20-$30, while those under 100 sell for $100+, depending on the figure. The Galoob figures sell moderately, except the Datas which seem to have picked up. Recent sales include "Q" MOC for $60 and "dark faced" data for $48, MOC.

DC Heroes - The best ones here are Superman, Penguin w/the missile, and the Joker w/hair on his face. All others are between $10 and $20. Lex Luthor can be found in the clearance aisles of most toy stores for under $2. Sales include Wonder Woman $13, Green Lantern $15, and Aquaman for $12. Recent acquisitions include Joker w/hair on face for $8, Batman w/square and round jaw for $4 each, and Lex Luthors for under $2. Nothing else special...

X-Men/X-Force - Variations are red hot! Most mentionable are the Kay Bee exclusive versions of Weapon X, and Wolverine #5 and the pink Cannonball. The weapon X with the pink tubes can still be found, but the Wolverine #5 variation seems to have disappeared. The pink version of Cannonball is quite rare and demands $25-$30. I think this will, without a doubt, go up. It may be too early to tell, but at this point I think that the Mutant Hall of Fame Set will not live up to expectations. This is because (1) I've heard that They are glued to their stands and their joints are glued in place, so the figures can't be "played with" Also they are far from hard to find. I feel the single carded figures are much more fun and are much better investments. The re-release of the first series figures has doubled interest in the originals, especially Storm and Nightcrawler, which aren't being re-done. Also, several of the re-releases have new paint jobs, increasing interest in the originals even more. The newer figures are doing well also, especially Banshee and Gambit, each of which is selling for $8-$10. The only other 2nd series figure of note is Iceman which, due in part to the re-release, now demands $30-$40. Most other figures sell well in the $4 range.

Toy-Biz Marvel - I think this line is the best by leaps and bounds! All figures from the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd series are in high demand. Some notable prices include: Daredevil $40, Silver Surfer $25-$30, Punisher #2 w/machine gun sound $20-$25, Venom #1 w/slime pores $25-$30, Venom #2 w/flicking tongue $10-$15, Thor and Green Goblin w/lever $25-$30 each and w/o lever $15-$20 each, Human Torch $15, The Thing $12, Invisible Woman $80-$100, Mister Fantastic $10. All the talking figures go for $10 except Venom and Wolverine which are $15. All Spider-Man figures are in high demand, especially #3, the web-climbing Spidey ($25). Other figures are great, but space precludes my discussing all of them. All in all, the entire line seemsto be a gold mine.

Well, that's all for now. Happy hunting and until McDonald's has a Beavis and Butthead Happy Meal, make mine Overstreet. ●-

OVERSTREET TOY MARKET ADVISORS

Dave Grisez
San DiegoComics & Coll
6937 El Cajon Blvd
San Diego, CA 92115
(619) 698-1177

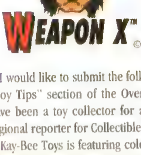
Becky Hoff
The Sunday Funnies
312 Occidental Ave South
Seattle, WA 98104
(800) 664-4891

Dave Johnson
Davis Ltd
1442 19th Street Apt #5B
Santa Monica, CA 90404
(310) 829-9233

Trina Kubeck
Simpsonmanta
2435 NW Thurman St
Portland, OR 97210
(503) 397-6561

Scott McAdams
Treasures of Youth
1201 "C" Street
Hayward, CA 94541
(510) 888-9675

James Bullock
150 Heller Dr
Oakes box 166
UCSC Santa Cruz CA 95064
(408) 459-6849



TOY TALK TIPS

I would like to submit the following information for your new "Toy Tips" section of the Overstreet Comic Book Monthly. I have been a toy collector for about 5 years and have been a regional reporter for Collectible Toys & Values.

Kay-Bee Toys is featuring color variations of some X-Men figures that carry a special **"Kay-Bee Collectors Exclusive"** label on the package. Among the figures are Wolverine 4 and 5. Wolverine 4 (Weapon X) has accessories that are lighter green rather than blue. On the Wolverine 5 figure, the suit is an olive green rather than black. As these are only available at Kay-Bee, I would hazard to guess that they should be considered rare, or at least much less common.

There is also a new color variation available for Cyclops. His new costume is blue and yellow rather than blue and white.

Another interesting find at a Pace Membership Warehouse (soon to be purchased by Wal-Mart) is a special Toy Biz 4 pack featuring Archangel, Mr. Sinister, Sauron, and Iceman. It should be pointed out that this Iceman figure is not the one that changes color when put into the freezer. Rather it's the one that was included with the Mutant Hall of Fame 10 pack. Still, I did not see this collection at any other toy or department store.

Since Marvel's purchase of 46% of Toy Biz stock, there have been several re-releases of the early Marvel figures. These re-releases have included Captain America, Dr. Doom, Venom, and Dr. Octopus. These figures are exactly the same except for the Venom figure that squirts water rather than coming with a packet of slime.

by Tim Janson

The gang's all here! Star Trek figures from Galoob.

© Paramount

We 'hear' this is a hot one! Ferengi from Playmates.

PRICING FIGURES WITH LOW SERIAL NUMBERS... The Playmates Star Trek: The Next Generation action figures are all individually numbered. In some cases when the number is 1000 or lower, a premium may be added.

	UNC	LC	MODC	MOC
Star Trek: The Next Generation				
Galoob (1st Series) 1988				
Picard	2.00	3.00	7.00	12.00
Riker	2.00	3.00	7.00	12.00
Worf	2.00	3.00	7.00	12.00
Dathon Yar	4.00	6.00	15.00	25.00
Geordi	2.00	3.00	7.00	12.00
Data (Blue Face)	10.00	16.00	39.00	65.00
Data (Spotted Face)	4.00	6.00	15.00	25.00
Data (Tan, Darker Face)	7.00	11.00	27.00	45.00
Data (Flesh)	3.00	5.00	12.00	20.00
Galoob Series (1989)				
Q	11.00	19.00	45.00	75.00
Ferengi	10.00	16.00	39.00	65.00	
Romulan	8.00	13.00	30.00	50.00
Worf	8.00	13.00	30.00	50.00
Star Trek: The Next Generation				
Playmates (1st Series) (1992)				
Picard	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
Riker	1.00	2.00	5.00	8.00
Worf	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
Data (pink, 1st series)	4.00	6.00	15.00	25.00
Data	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
Data	1.00	2.00	5.00	8.00
Geordi La Forge /removable visor	7.00	11.00	18.00	30.00

	UNC	LC	MODC	MOC
Geordi La Forge (2nd Release/Visor Glued)	1.00	2.00	5.00	8.00
Ferengi	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
Romulan	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
Gowron (Klingon)	2.00	3.00	6.00	10.00
2nd Series (1993)				
Borg	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Beverly Crusher	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Wesley Crusher	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
McCoy (Bones)	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
Captain Scotty	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
Picard	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Riker	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Benzite	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
K' ehleyr	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
Locutus	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Worf (Battle Dress)	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Guinan	1.80	3.00	7.20	12.00
Geordi La Forge Dress Uniform	1.20	2.00	4.80	8.00
Dathon	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
Q	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
Sela	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
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Data	1.50	2.50	6.00	10.00
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BEWARE!

THE CLAWS OF THE CAT

Marvels 1st Comic Devoted to a Super-Heroine!

Stan Lee was wrong. If you subscribe to the theory that comics at their best will, among other things, serve as a reflection of our culture, that is.

In 1977, in a preface to a re-printing of "Beware! The Claws of the Cat" #1 in Marvel's anthology "The Superhero Women," Lee writes, "You win a few and you lose a few. This is one of the times we kinda struck out." Maybe in the sense that the creative team for the book fell apart soon after it was assembled, but in no other way was the four-issue run a strikeout.

At least two points make the four-issue series significant: 1) It is the first Marvel comic devoted to a super-heroine and 2) It is a reflection of the early 1970s in that Greer Nelson, a.k.a. The Cat, is concerned with feminist issues.

In Cat #1 (Nov. 1972), Greer Grant meets and falls for a young policeman, Bill Nelson. Because she senses that her new lover likes to protect her, Greer chooses to play up a helpless act only to become bored with it. "Don't you think I could drive the new car daddy gave me, Bill"? she asks.

And his answer is, "I'd feel like a fool baby! Besides, I know more about these things!"

But after Bill Nelson is shot and killed trying to stop a robbery while off-duty, Greer is forced to rely upon herself. However, "Every interview was the same, and women's lib began to have new meaning for Greer," Linda Fite wrote.

Finally, Greer runs into her old college physics professor in the supermarket, a woman named Dr. Tumolo, and gets a job as her lab assistant. It is as the subject of Dr. Tumolo's project to "fulfill the potential of womankind" that Greer gains the powers that enable her to become The Cat. Her first adventure involved foiling Mal Donalbain, the financier of Dr. Tumolo's research, who intended to use her equipment to create an army of Amazons to work in his health clubs by controlling them with his will nullifier.

The Cat's subsequent foes are somewhat more noteworthy in Marvel lore. In issue #2 (Jan. 1973) she battled The Owl, #3 (Apr. 1973) brought Commander Kraken, and #4 (June 1973) saw her square off with Man-Bull. The Cat also teamed with Spider-Man in Marvel Team-Up #8 to take on Man-Killer. But it is the way in which the women's liberation movement is portrayed in both Greer's marriage and The Cat's battles that incited angry responses from those who were fearful and ignorant of the movement.

In #4, the letters page, "Cat Scratches," carries a letter that states in part, "I'm writing about a comic mag that is good, but is flawed and will be ruined by Women's Lib sayings.

"Equal pay for equal work is fair and just, and it's the right way. But all that stuff about 'male chauvinist pigs' and women being 'sex objects' is a lotta (CENSORED). Anyway, what's *wrong* with being a sex object"?

The letter-writer received a response of "Apparently, you've never been whistled and leered at on a street corner. Or had a sensitive extremity pinched in an elevator car. Or been treated with disdain because you dared show some grain of intelligence. Or been refused a job because you might become pregnant."

In #3, another letter-writer describes women's lib as "a Communist plot to overthrow the country by taking out the cornerstone of the family institution." And in

All Covers © MEG

By Gene Lomoriello

same letter, "Women belong in the home, not on the picket line calling men 'male chauvinist pigs.'" (Incidentally, #3 also carries a letter from Frank Miller praising "a woman character with character" at last.)

In short, the social battles fought in the stories and letters pages of this title are exceeded only by the Green Lantern/Green Arrow stories in terms of comics as a reflection of early

1970s American society. And at $12 for #1 and $8 each for #s 2-4 (in Near Mint), these books are a steal and should be sought after by anyone who appreciates GL/GA.

The series was written by Linda Fite, who left Marvel after she and husband Herb Trimpe had their first child. This, along with penciler Marie Severin's promotion to head Marvel's coloring department, killed the series prematurely. But not before some fine stuff was turned out.

Severin was inked in #1 by the incredible Wally Wood, producing a haunting, sublime look. #2 had a similar but less powerful look as Jim Mooney inked Severin. The real treat is in #3, where Bill Everett takes Paty Greer's layouts and produces a beautiful book in his Golden Age Namor style. And #4 saw Jim Starlin and Alan Weiss combine, under Frank McLaughlin inks, to create an airy, open look with amazing angles in the action sequences. John Romita supplied the covers in Marvel's house style.

In early 1976, Greer Nelson was recycled from comics limbo. She was transformed from The Cat into Tigra in Marvel Chillers #3. Ironically, Avengers readers know Tigra as a sex object among super-heroines, throwing herself at many male Avengers.

A further irony is that the Cat costume was re-discovered by another Marvel sex object, Patsy Walker, in Avengers #144. She donned the costume to become the Hellcat, and after an intro tale in the Avengers, Hellcat joined the Defenders in #44 and became a mainstay of the team until very near the title's demise. Tigra and Hellcat finally met in the early days of the recently-cancelled West Coast Avengers series.

Though today's Greer Nelson is a character of a different stripe, the four issues of Claws of the Cat remain available to collectors as one of the most reasonably priced cutting-edge comics of their time period. Not owning these interesting little gems just might be a... Cat-tastrophe!

Blackhawk:

Blackhawk has the rare distinction of being one of the very few hero series to be published all through the 1940's and 1950's. In fact, the Blue Knights of the sky didn't stop soaring until 1968, when DC's Silver Age was starting to wane. The longevity of the strip was due (in part) to its strong beginnings in Quality's classic World War II title, Military Comics. The aerial avengers accomplish the difficult feat of establishing solid individual characters, while at the same time performing as a cohesive and coordinated fighting team. They also established a real presence on the newsstand with momentous battles against some outrageously evil Axis threats. In fact they became so popular, that they were given their own title while continuing as the cover feature in Military Comics. As with many war related strips, the Blackhawks felt a little footloose and lacking in direction after the war ended. But even with the end of WWII, they remained popular.

Then came the Cold War, and the strip regained focus. 1952 was a particularly great year: Columbia brought the Blackhawks to the big screen in a 15-episode super-serial, while Quality's house ads boasted that Blackhawk was selling over a million copies per issue. To add spice to the Red ruckus, Quality threw some great science-fiction elements into the mix, and the end-product ranks among the wilder manifestations of the "anti-Commie era."

Blackhawk #56 (Sep 1952) is a superb example of this, with the ultimate non-super hero team squaring off against "The War Wheel". The story begins "...From the aggressor camp it came, a spiky juggernaut of doom, bent on smashing a fighting democracy. " It's true that the Hawks did save a large number of little European democracies - the one under siege in this tale is called Malkaria. Blackhawk himself conceives and carries out the plan that thwarts the rolling rampage, showing once again why he's the team's leader. Number 56 also features one of those pre-code no-nonsense Blackhawk "search and destroy missions" as the freedom fighters put a stop to the "School for Sabotage". Topping off the issue is a full-page ad announcing the imminent release of the Columbia serial.

© Quality

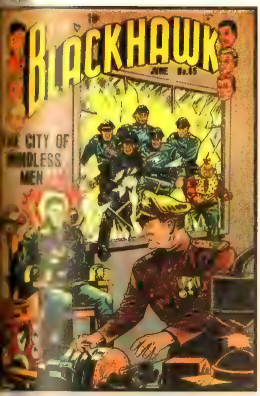
Blackhawk #59 (Dec 1952) contains the supreme "Red scare" sci-fi combination, "Beachhead on Asteroid X". This story is the last one in the issue, and well it is, because it's a tough act to follow. When " ...a runaway asteroid from some far off galaxy..." enters the Solar System and parks itself 1000 miles from Earth - the "aggressors" quickly rocket over and set up a deadly "space cannon" capable of wreaking havoc on the forces of democracy. It is up to the Hawks to fly there in the one "allied" rocket ship and do something about the giant gun.

Basically it's the same old story. Yes, they go over and punch out the Commies, and... well - the grand traditions of both democracy and space opera are upheld. Also in #59 is the absurdly contrived Commie con-game "The Red Tomorrow", where, in an attempt to demoralize the Hawks, the Reds capture the Blackhawks and pretend to subject them to a time-travel experiment. They actually take them to a carefully constructed city-scape and a well-rehearsed "future" where the Communists have prevailed. The clue that tips Blackhawk off to the deception is silly enough to remind us that the ghost of self-parody was smiling behind many of the more strident early 1950's action stories.

Blackhawk #65 (Jun 1953) shows just how hot the cold war could get between the covers of a comic book. Quality was really into Commie crusading during this era: T-Man tangled with Reds in Police Comics and his own title, G.I. Combat waged a continual assault upon enemy Red forces, and Plastic Man, in his role as gummy G-Man, was messing up many a Communist plot. Of course the Blackhawks were always at their best when there were military maneuvers to perform. And with their "modern" jet fighters they were ideally equipped to handle a world-wide theater of operations.

"The City of Mindless Men" takes place in another "small European democracy"- which calls upon the Blackhawks to investigate zombie-like souls found wandering the hillsides. The Hawks discover a "Red city" in a cave where captured locals are forced to mine uranium. The "zombies" are men "who caused trouble" and were subjected to the mind eraser. This is the diabolical device Blackhawk is strapped into on the cover. Obviously this menace is also overcome, with suitable derring-do and a big dose of that Blackhawk no

By Pat S. Calhoun



longevity, Blackhawk also had a history of great artwork. The original designer, Chuck Cuidera, started a grand tradition in 1941 that was eventually passed to artistic legend Reed Crandall. Reed's tenure with Blackhawk resulted in some of the most glorious work of the golden age. Crandall was still penciling some Blackhawk stuff in the early 1950's, but by then Quality had adopted the policy of having others ink Crandall's drawings... which lessened their impact.

As a final note, all three of the issues above feature four-page Chop-Chop humor vignettes. Chop-Chop supplied the team's comic relief, and although they did exaggerate his Chinese traits, the portrayal seemed somehow warm-hearted enough to mostly overcome the negative aspects of stereotyping and still be enjoyable.

In these little 4 page misadventures, Chop-Chop is really the colorful clown inside us all. His vignette in issue 65 is particularly poignant when he drinks a "Chinese love potion" and discovers "what women want..." ●

holds barred attitude... But even with the predictable ending, it's still great fun.

Ditto for "The Space Mirror" where the boys in blue must contend with a giant orbiting "magnifying glass" capable of burning down cities. This one is pretty far-fetched, as the Hawks hijack a spaceship and head out to deal with the lethal lens, and is reminiscent of "Beachhead on Asteroid X".

Although he wore no mask and had no secret identity, Blackhawk was truly a man of mystery. With his international team (a German, a Frenchman, a Pole, a Yank, a Swede, and a Chinese) living aloof on their island, they were literally their own law and country. These ethnic touches that characterize the group members gave the strip a cosmopolitan flavor.

The Blackhawks were the definitive representation of "team spirit" - a concept still brand new to the early Silver Age world. It's interesting to note that DC acquired Blackhawk from the recently demised Quality, with issue #108 (Jan 1957) being the first to display the DC emblem. Issue #108 is dated just one month after the last Quality ish. Amazingly, DC was introducing their own non-super hero team, the Challengers of the Unknown, in Showcase #6 (Jan-Feb 1957). Here's one for the historical notebook: Both **Blackhawk #108** and **Showcase #6**, the two pioneering team books of DC's Silver Age, were on the stands at the same time!

Besides original concepts and exceptional

© Quality

Namor... The Avenging Son!

The Sub-Mariner is considered by many to be the best aquatic based character of the Golden Age. He broke new ground (or water) as a hero. Namor is as strong as 1,000 men, yet he doesn't have to wear tights and a cape! Namor (which translated means "Avenging Son"), was actually half human, the offspring of a ship's captain and a female from an undersea race called the Submariners.

Later, the destruction of her people by American ships (as they were breaking up ice-flows) filled Namor's mother with hatred for "surface dwellers," which she instilled in the Atlantean Prince. This was the basic theme; and when combined with Everett's great love for and experiences upon the sea, provided a unique character motivation and superb setting, for the strip.

Sometimes tempermental himself, Bill Everett may have echoed some of his own persona in Namor. This was accomplished by masterfully blending Namor's amazing powers with his "mission of revenge," to produce more than just a simple villain. Everett's complex and pathotic creation was actually the first "anti-hero" of the Golden Age. When Captain America joined Torch and Namor as the companies third super star 15 months later, Timely could boast ownership of a powerful and symbolic triad of characters... Cap for land battles, the Human Torch for air power, and the Sub-Mariner for conquest of the oceans!

Yet Namor's most interesting adversary in the early issues was his hero co-star in Marvel Mystery... the Human Torch! The unprecedented concept of pitting two stars against each other was a master stroke for Timely, and the symbolism of water against fire was the perfect inspiration for both art and story.

Because the Sub-Mariner was Vengeful and destructive, he destroyed anything or anybody who stood in his way. It was inevitable that a hero (like Torch) would be summoned to stop the aquatic rampager. The elemental clashes between fire and water that followed are classics for all time. Although they all ended in a "draw," the battles between these two characters remain stand-outs in comic history!

As America entered the second World War, Timely's characters answered the call of battle. Namor's belligerence was replaced by patriotism, and he became an avenging force for the allies. The back drop for most of his War battles was the ocean (natch). But this didn't stop him from using the wings on his feet (periodically) to assist a soldier or sailor in need. Teamed up with the other two Timely headliners in All Select, All Winners, and Daring, Namor special qualities perfectly complimented the Human Torch and Captain America in their all out war against the enemies of liberty and Democracy.

Sub-Mariner held a special in early comic history for three additional reasons. First is the issue of relative popularity. If one measure of a comic book hero's popularity is the number of titles they are featured in, then it is interesting to note that the Sub-Mariner appeared in more comic titles than either the Torch or Captain America! Namor appeared in 13 titles, compared to 10 each for Cap and Torch. (A mind boggling 16 titles featured all three characters!)

Second is the absence of a "boy side-kick" in the Sub-Mariner mythos. Shortly after the incredible success of Robin over at DC, it seemed no hero strip was complete without a youthful costumed "helper" for young readers to identify with. In fairly short order, the majority of heroes were joined by a boy side-kick of some sort... ad nauseam. Not to be out done, many Timely heroes jumped on the

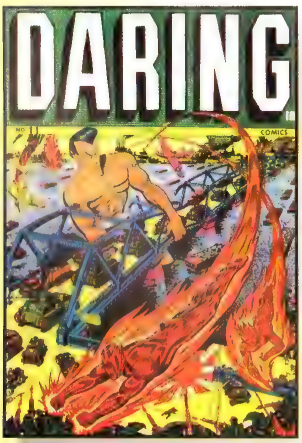
By Steve Gentner

HUMAN TORCH
CAPTAIN AMERICA
SUB-MARINER
Featured in
ALL
SELECT
10¢
NO. 1
COMICS
HITLER'S SS
BERCHTESGADEN
ALL NEW!
EXCITING!

"boy hero bandwagon." Cap had Bucky... Torch had Toro... but of the three main Timely heroes, only Namor was a strong enough character to remain solo. And a good thing too. Can you imagine a cover blurb like "He's young! He's tough! Introducing in this issue... Namor Boy??!!"

Third is the interesting cover art. The great Alex Schomburg produced classic covers for most of the Timely titles, and the Sub-Mariner's own book was no exception. The wartime issues of the early '40s exemplify his brilliant work. As the war progressed, so did Schomburg's exaggerated proportions for the Timely stars. One of the wonderfully frantic, action-packed cover scenes, features Namor as a symbolic giant, towering 50 feet above an enemy landing craft he is destroying! On another cover, he hefts a huge anchor to smash a submarine in two! In a real sense, Schomburg's covers were literally "bigger than life" propaganda messages.

But unlike the creative talents who worked on the title in those early years, we have the advantage of history's long view. We can look back at Namor's arrogance and strength and see that it actually enhanced the popularity of Timely's aquatic super-star and can see how his anger "spiced up" the interplay with other characters like the Torch. We can analyze why readers might have been fascinated at the thought that Namor was potentially dangerous to *both* the AXIS *and* the Allies! He was half human, he



Upper Left - Submariner Comics #10 (Summer 1943)
Upper Right - Submariner Comics #16 (Spring 1945)
Lower Left - Submariner Comics #8 (Winter 1942)
Lower Right - Submariner Comics #6 (Summer 1942)

PAGE 36 Daring Comics #10 (Winter 1944-45)
PAGE 37 All Select Comics #1 (Fall 1943)
PAGE 38 Upper Left - Back Cover Pin-Up from Marvel Mystery Comics #21 (Jul 1941)
Lower Left - Daring Comics #11 (Summer 1945)
Lower Right - Submariner Comics #2 (Summer 1941)

was different, he was unpredictable... and that's exactly why his character was so successful!

It is these wonderfully unique story elements, plus increasing interest in Everett and Schomburg issues, that have boosted the Golden Age Sub-Mariner to a high rung on the demand ladder. Many issues continue to climb in value with keys and classic covers commanding a generous premium.

The High End Market Report

BETHLEHEM COLLECTION COMICS - High grade Silver Age continues to be the story as a seemingly insatiable demand continues to slowly draw out top flight material. The most recent saga begins with the release of a few "Bethlehem Collection" books in the recent Christie's sale (Lois Lane #1, 2, 3, 4, and Justice League #2 and 3). They realized extraordinary prices with the high grade Lois Lane #1 (pictured below) selling for a record $4,830. This sale seemed to renew collector focus on the Bethlehem pedigree and re-confirmed collector willingness to pay above guide for certain pedigreed books.

As a result of these events, Joe Rainone (one of the two original purchasers of the Bethlehem books) decided to sell significant portion of the Bethlehem Silver Age material that he had retained for his personal collection.

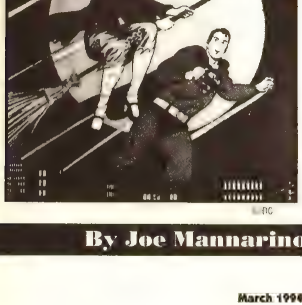
This was the first significant release of Bethlehem books into the market in several years. Several collectors and dealers began negotiations with the customary competitive intrigue. When the "smoke finally cleared," the books had been quickly scooped up by two resolute west coast collectors, Robert Ronin and a collector who wishes to remain anonymous for the time being. The list of Bethlehem books in the sale includes:

Showcase #4, 8, 13, 14; Adventure #247; Spider-Man #1; Green Lantern #1 (SA); Our Army At War #1; Fighting Forces #1; Richie Rich #1; Sgt. Bilko #1; and Superman #100.

Others were: Amazing Fantasy #15; Spider-Man #2-50; Amazing Adventure #1-6, Amazing Adult Fantasy 7-14; Detective #225; Fantastic Four #1; House Of Mystery #1; Hulk #1-6; Journey Into Mystery #1; Strange Tales #101-110; Tales of Suspense #1-41; Tales to Astonish #1-42; X-Men #1-5, and many other scarce titles from the 50's. All the books were in high grade.

The Showcase #4 was sold almost immediately for $30,000 to the unnamed collector, the rest of the collection to Rob Ronin for well into six figures.

When Rob Ronin was asked about his plans for the collection, he responded, "I could not wait to receive, examine, and briefly savor them before quickly placing them in my safe deposit box at the bank. That's where they will stay as a part of my personal collection."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LOIS LANE
Featuring
"The WITCH of METROPOLIS!"
HEE-HEE! THANKS TO THIS WITCH'S BROOMSTICK, NOW I CAN FLY AS FAST AS YOU, SUPERMAN!
GREAT GUNS! LOIS HAS SUPERNATURAL POWERS AND THEY MAY PROVE MIGHTIER THAN MINE!

The Bethlehem collection was uncovered in the mid '80s by collectors Phil Weiss and Joe Rainone. The collection was compiled by collector Stanley Pachon from Bethlehem, PA. Bethlehem books can be identified by the "E. J. Kery-Bethlehem PA" stamp that appears on the back of many of the items. Evidently this was the name of the store where the books were originally purchased.

Mr. Pachon passed away leaving what has been described as a "house of wall to wall and floor to ceiling paper." Along with the nearly 18,000 comic books in the collection, there were magazines, pulps, dime novels, newspapers, and "just about anything else you can think of." The sale of his estate provided the opportunity to purchase this material.

The Bethlehem Collection included mos Silver Age titles, Pre Silver Age titles, and ever a few post Golden Age books. The condition on the majority of the material was exceptio al. For those interested in more details con cerning the Bethlehem collection, see the original Comic Book Marketplace issue #7 dated 11/91.

Another stunning Silver Age sale durin the month was an Amazing Fantasy #15 (NM 92) for $25,000.

Original Art - Over the past few months Nadia and I have bought and sold three Frazetta paintings, a Hildebrandt painting, the earliest Barney Google Sunday page, a Red Baron Peanuts daily, a 1958 Peanuts daily, a Hogarth Sunday page, a stunning Eisner Spirit specialty piece, a hand colored 1924 McManus Sunday, several comic book pages by Jack Kirby, Don Heck art, and a Foster panel.

Other Miscellaneous Sales - We've also turned a Buck Rogers rocket ship (circa 1930s), a little Nemo bell toy (circa 1905), a Superman roll over tank (mint in box, circa 1940s), several movie posters, a collection of Action Comics, and a stunning group of pedigree Harvey Comics which included virtually all the key #1s of the Post 1950 titles. Examples of the pedigree Harvey Comics include: Little Dot #1; Richie Rich #1; Spookey #1; Hot Stuff #1; Casper #1-20; Stumbo #1; Misc. Dick Tracy; Misc. Blondie; Witches Tales #1; Chamber of Chills #1; Little Lotta #1; Little Audrey #1; Wendy #1; Baby Huey #1; Capt. 3-D #1; and most of the associated Harvey annual titles.

If you have a "High End" sale you'd like to report, contact Joe Mannarino, c/o the Overstreet Comic Book Monthly, P.O. Box 2610, Cleveland TN 37320. Or FAX us at (615) 479-8156. See you next issue with another installment of "Collecting At The Top."

By Joe Mannarino

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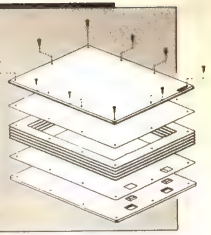

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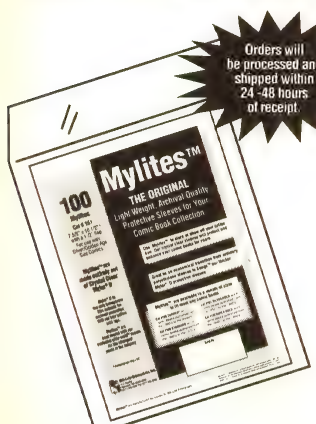
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Conservation for the Collector: "Out-Foxing" Fungus!

Imagine if you will, an average collector with a fairly substantial collection of comic books spanning in age from the forties to the present era. Let's assume this average collector has not looked through the collection in quite some time, since the collector spends most of their time purchasing and acquiring new items.

One day, our collector decides to re-examine a copy of Superman #38 that was previously purchased at a local convention last year... just to see if it is truly the "near mint" copy it was remembered to be.

Rooting through the boxes of comic books that have accumulated through the years, The item in question is finally found. The book is gingerly removed from the same mylar sleeve that has been protecting it since it was first acquired. The collector then flips open the near mint cover to behold it's creamy pearl colored pages... and discovers instead a small group of rusty looking patches that was never there before, occupying a 1/4 inch area at the top of the comic.

As promised in my last column, this time we will examine molds, "foxing," and the importance of "good housekeeping" in safeguarding your collection from attack by microbiological organisms.

I can think of nothing more heartbreaking than a high grade copy of a comic (or similar collectible) that has been damaged by "foxing" as a result of improper environmental storage. This is especially depressing since the growth of mold or fungi is easily prevented. In order to better understand the danger that molds pose to a collection, It is important to examine the life cycle of these micro-organisms.

During the life-cycle of a typical fungi (and this includes molds) the organism reaches a stage where reproduction occurs. In order to reproduce, the fungi creates spores (basically the "seed") that spread and help in the dispersal of the organism to new habitats. A single mold will produce large amounts of these spores in order to increase the odds of successful germination. Spores, once released, are carried by circulating winds until they land on a surface that contains conditions suitable for their incubation and subsequent growth. Since these spores can survive for an indefinite length of time, they pose a constant source of danger and are in the air around us at all times just waiting until conditions favor their growth.

These conditions generally include the following: oxygen to breath (although there are molds and fungi that do not need oxygen in order to survive), a food source large enough to maintain the life-cycle during the growth period, a temperature that is suitable to a fungi's specific requirements and an area that is sufficiently humid. If these factors are present in an area, then mold will grow. If these factors are not present, then the reverse is also true - the fungi will not incubate. Because a fungi needs such specific requirements in order to sustain it's life-cycle, there are some very simple steps that the average collector can take in order to prevent an infestation from occurring in the collection.

While it is reasonable to assume that the average collector is unable to limit the amount of oxygen available, and any "food source" needed by the organism is contained within the comic itself, only the environmental factors of temperature and humidity are within the ability of most collectors to control.

To begin with, the mold that can be readily found on paper has a narrow temperature range in which it's life-cycle is optimized. If temperatures are lowered (or for that matter raised) beyond the limits of this optimal range, then the growth of the fungus is altered and/or rendered impossible. Research has found that most of the fungi responsible for the infestation of paper and cellulosic materials requires an optimal temperature range of 65°-86° Fahrenheit. Any temperature outside of this range will generally serve to protect your collection from biological attack.

One problem, as readers of previous columns will immediately recognize, the optimum range for mold growth covers the same temperature range recommended for ideal storage of paper and cellulosic materials (68°-72° F). And what's worse, some species of mold are active at temperatures lower than 65° F! By maintaining a constant temperature in your storage area of 72° F or lower, you're still providing favorable conditions in which certain species of mold will flourish.

This leaves only one factor that can easily be controlled by the collector: Relative humidity.

As mentioned in previous columns, relative humidity is a major factor in the degradation and subsequent browning of paper fibers. Relative humidity levels above 65% readily contribute to the germination of spores. It is therefore in the collectors best interest to control, as much as possible, the relative humidity levels within the storage area.

By keeping the relative humidity to the recommended 50%, spores are prevented from establishing themselves within the collection. If relative humidity is ever found to be above the 50% recommendation (for example a flooded basement or damp storage area) then mold will begin to propagate. Put another way, the mildew you smell is the mold you cannot see. If you are unable to easily control the relative humidity of the storage area (for example, after a flood or during a spring thaw) then installing a fan to promote air circulation can act to prevent the spores from landing long enough to infect the damp paper fibers and at the same time will help to dry out the damp areas.

If an infestation does occur, it is most likely to be in the form of "foxing". This term "foxing", is ascribed to the appearance of reddish-brown areas, encircled by a lighter-brown ring. And while it is a problem found mainly on books and older prints, it can also be found on comic

By Conservation Technician Tracy Ileft

books. It is encountered more often than any other mold or fungal infestation and usually it's appearance is restricted to a small area and is not wide-spread over the pages of the comic itself. Interestingly enough, it's exact origins have not been proven conclusively, but two theories exist:

1) The reddish-brown spots are fungal in origin and under damp conditions germinate and the life-cycle begins.

OR

2) The brown stains are caused by the formation of metallic salts from stray metallic compounds located in the paper fibers themselves.

In addition to those two theories, there is a third hypothesis that suggests the conversion of metallic ions into metallic salts occurs due to the life-cycle of a fungal infestation - basically a combination of the two previous theories.

Experimental data from around the world (most notably from researchers in Germany, Britain, and Canada) shows traces of iron, copper and zinc within the regions of the staining. Also, it has been discovered that the pH of the stained areas is dramatically more acidic than the surrounding paper support. Heavily "foxed" books, prints, and comics, all suffer from embrittlement, degradation, and if the damage is severe enough, complete perforation of the stained areas. Foxing, whether caused by micro-organisms or the formation of metallic salts, will eventually result in a weakness and loss of strength and fiber structure irreparably damaging the comic for life.

SAFEGUARDS

In order to safeguard collections from harm, a systematic routine of cleaning and maintenance that monitors the condition of the collection is needed. By randomly selecting books from the collection and investigating them thoroughly cover to cover, the collector can effectively monitor the state of his/her books. How often a random search through the collection occurs, depends on the environmental conditions of the storage area in which the collection is housed. If the environment is below recommended levels then spot-checks should be undertaken more frequently.

If you do discover a mold growth on a book or have purchased a book with mold or foxing already present, there are several things you should do immediately. First, panic! Mold and spores are always active, all they require are the proper conditions in order to grow. They never die! Even So, if you discover a problem, consider it an indication of wide spread infestation and a harbinger of worse things to come. If detected early enough, the damage caused by mold and fungi can be reduced and the contaminated books can be saved from irreparable harm. Without giving away any trade secrets, I heartily recommend the following course of action:

1) Remove the books that are contaminated to an area away from the rest of the collection. This will prevent the spread of spores to books not yet contaminated.

2) Change the environmental conditions of the storage area so that spore growth cannot readily occur. Lower the temperature and the relative humidity to within recommended levels.

3) Take you contaminated comics outside and gently brush over any visible areas that are present. Throw away the brush when you are finished as it will be contaminated with spores.

4) Store the contaminated books in a separate storage area away from the rest of the collection. Make sure that environmental conditions within this second storage area are within recommended levels.

5) Keep air within both storage areas circulating. Stagnant air allows spores a chance to land and germinate if conditions are favorable. Do not consciously create a micro-environment where mold spores can incubate. (For more information on microclimates see previous installments of this column.)

6) After an extended period of time, check the contaminated books again for further activity. If no further activity is noticeable, then the books can be returned to the main collection. However, if maintaining a separate storage area is feasible, then the contaminated books should remain quarantined.

Fungi and mold damage can occur very easily to a collection, in spite of the diligence of the collector to prevent such damage from occurring. Through the application of sound and archivally safe storage methods and the implementation of a regular schedule of examination, the appearance of mold and other fungi will be kept to an absolute minimum and damage to the collection, from these sources, will be eliminated. Remember, the appearance of mold and fungi on a comic is a danger sign that cannot be ignored as it is symptomatically indicative of a larger problem - high relative humidity.

Until next time, when we'll look at rodents, pests, and things that go "munch" in the night... keep on collecting.

Have a question about comic book conservation or preservation? Send it to:

Tracey Heft
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PO Box 2610
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Cash Paid For Historic "Ashcans!"

Do you have an unidentifiable comic with an odd black & white cover and color interior?

It may be an historic "ashcan!"

In the early days of comic book publishing, there was a never-ending battle between highly competitive businessmen to lay claim to every conceivable comic book title. In order to properly register the title with the copyright office in Washington DC, publication of the book was required.

In the heat of competition, crafty comic book publishers developed a system to fool the government into believing that the book had been produced. They produced "ashcan" comics! These "imposters" existed only for legal registration and were never sold.

"Ashcans" usually had black and white covers (often Velox prints) stapled to color interiors from previously printed comics.

One "ashcan" comic was rushed to the copyright office in Washington DC to register the title and logo art. Another was placed in the publisher's files. Often extra "ashcans" were made and given to editors and other employees as souvenirs. Sometimes these rarities surface in today's comics collector marketplace.

Recently signed and numbered limited edition "ashcans" have appeared on the collectors market. Though highly desirable, these modern-day collectibles are not traditional "ashcan" editions.

Genuine historical "ashcans" are by definition among the rarest of comic books.

If you aren't sure that the book you have is an "ashcan" or not — please call me toll-free at **800-344-6060**. I'll help you identify your book and gladly make an offer.

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MARKET REPORTS

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LEE HESTER
CINDY OKUMOTO
Lee's Comics
3783 El Camino Real
Palo Alto, CA 94306
(415) 493-3957

Current Age

In the current comics market continues to constrict, speculators fall by the wayside, and "hot" loses its meaning, I suggest that retailers who want to broaden their customer base, plus give their regulars something different to try, stock some of the smaller press comics they might not have considered a few months back.

Retailers, of course, must be selective about which particular comics to carry. I have tried this with moderate success, ordering those comics I felt would have some merit. Admittedly, some books will go unsold and result in a loss. However, the ones that do sell will make up for the loss hopefully resulting in a break-even situation if not a small profit. The bottom line is to attract customers who may not be interested in the standard super-hero fare.

Bongo - Bartman #1 and Radioactive Man #1 sold solid numbers, though Radioactive Man seems the weakest of the four Bongo releases; Simpsons #1 and Itchy & Scratchy #1 continue to sell daily.

Cartoon Books - Bone #14 arrived last week, and both of my stores were sold out by the end of the day! Bone now out sells Cerebus, which for the longest time was our best selling independent black and white comic. Anyone who has not discovered this true gem of a comic by now must have been living in a black hole. As a sample, take a look at the artwork on the cover of this magazine and don't forget to read Michael Naiman's great interview with Bone creator and artist, Jeff Smith, elsewhere in this issue.

Continuity - Of the nine comics currently being produced by Neal Adams' company, none of them sell more than a couple of copies. Even Valeria sold only three copies. Part of the problem is the fact that this was issue #5; issues #1-4 (including the much hyped Spawn/Valeria crossover), never materialized. The rest of the problem lies in the fact that the company seems resistant to producing books on a regular schedule. Why not try the strategy of producing just one really good book a year, with solid writing and art? Maybe it would sell.

Dark Horse - Sin City: A Dame To Kill For remains the best selling Dark Horse title. Anticipation is starting to build for the Legends imprint title Hellboy by Mike Mignola.

DC - I think DC gets the award for the only cover gimmick of the past twelve months worth buying. The make-your-own cover on Superman: Man of Steel #30 was fun and nostalgic (remember Colorforms?). It gave people a chance to be creative and "play" with the comic. On the Vertigo front, will the upcoming Books of Magic regular series generate the same magic as the mini-series did? And what will move in to replace Sandman as the top Vertigo title? I think the best candidate is Hellblazer with consistently strong stories and knock-out covers by Glenn Fabry.

Defiant - Plasm, Dark Dominion, and Good Guys all sell to a small but dedicated following.

Fantagraphics - Perhaps the leader in alternative publishing, they are making a real push to expand readership for their titles. Using the slogan "A Different Beat," they are creating a market separate and distinct from the mainstream here. Sales of all their products (books as well as comics) continue to rise in both my stores.

Alternative Press Gender Stats

I've discovered that a higher percentage of my female customers read alternative comics than do the male. At least 80% of the women who shop in my stores read one or more small press or alternative comics; maybe only 35% or so of the male customer do.

Image - Spawn is holding; everything else is not. WildC.A.T.S is down 20%. Extreme Studio books have become the worst sellers here, with sales down by 40%... and still dropping.

Kitchen Sink - Still going strong after 25 years. Bernie Wrightson's Captain Stern sells to both die-hard fans and newcomers alike. From Hell (the complex and engrossing study of the Jack the Ripper legend by Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell), appeals to crime buffs, fans of Moore's writing, and followers of Campbell's unique and detailed art style. I think it's a must read!

Malibu - Ultraverse titles have slowed slightly, with the sole exception of Mantra. Barry Windsor-Smith's Rune, along with the Bravura line's Breed by Jim Starlin and Power & Glory by Howard Chaykin all look promising. As part of its manga line, Malibu is doing an adaptation of Project A-ko with art by Ben Dunn. This book should sell well tomanga fans, better than the several Robotech spin-offs series whose art is often less than inspiring.

Marvel - Now that the last issue of Daredevil: Fall From Grace has arrived, some customers are asking what was the point of the whole story. I think Frank Miller's Man Without Fear is the better story by far, and sells over three times the usual Daredevil numbers here. Beavis and Butthead promises to be a big seller, a la Ren and Stimpy and Simpsons. We need more comics that tie into other facets of popular culture. Dell and Gold Key once published movie and television tie-in comics for everything that was popular at the time. If done well, tie-in comics can accomplish the same goals as stocking small press comics, i.e. bringing in new customers. The up-coming Looney Tunes comic from DC is a continued step in the right direction.

EC Reprints (Russ Cochran) - These are constant, solid sellers. Now that we have the complete comic line, we have them all displayed on one rack. Keeping them together, on constant display, definitely helps them sell.

Slave Labor - Evan Dorkin's books, Milk & Cheese and Hectic Planet, sell well with their manic style. Even Darlene's boyfriend on the TV show "Roseanne" was shown wearing a Milk & Cheese T-shirt. No Hope is gaining a following as a lower key, slice-of-life book.

Topps - With the cooling of the dinosaur frenzy, the lateness of the Jurassic Park: Raptor comic resulted in a lowered demand and consequently lowered sales. The upcoming Cadillacs & Dinosaurs series looks promising, though some local fans of Mark Schultz's art are disappointed to find that he will not be handling the art chores on this series. Zorro sells respectable numbers.

Valiant - Numbers are way down, but at least we can predict the sales figures for any given issue much more accurately now. Even sales on the all chromium special issues have slowed. Everyone buying them is actually reading them, finally! Phone calls requesting early Valiant back issues have slowed dramatically; the majority of Valiant related calls are from those wanting to sell.

Mature Readers Comics

Exactly what is a mature reader comic? And who is a mature reader? For example, all of the DC Vertigo line is labeled mature readers; they are mature in the sense that a ten year old simply would not understand the more complex plot. Other comics may be mature for similar reasons, because of controversial themes, or because of more graphic art.

I personally believe that many of the mature readers comics (Eightball, Hate, Peepshow, and Lowlife, to name just a few) have stories worth telling and should be made available to potential customers beyond the "superheroes only" market. I like to think of a comic book store like a specialty book store, whose books contain art as well as text. Any quality book store will carry a wide range of reading material, from children's books to books of interest only to adults.

Silver Age & Golden Age

I have been buying and selling Golden Age and Silver Age comics for over 15 years. In the beginning, it was the largest part of my business, and one that I still enjoy immensely. Lately, this area makes up only about 5% of overall sales.

Blockbuster Video

I think we have definitely gotten to the point where a comic store need not carry older comics to survive; our specialized knowledge of old comics is trivia in today's market. This will certainly make it easier for large chains like Blockbuster to move into the field. Blockbuster's sophisticated computer systems and marketing knowledge will give them the upper hand. They are already #1 in video rental, as big as their next 400 competitors combined.

When you go into Blockbuster, you don't find anyone with a great knowledge of old movies, just workers who can charge you for your rentals and point out where the new releases are. A similar chain of comic book stores could dominate without having people that know about old comics. So where does this leave the independent comic shop owner? I think that in order for us to survive and prosper against savvy competitors like Blockbuster, we need to develop some business acumen of our own.

In Conclusion

It's great to hear all the feedback from readers of the market reports. Don't forget to say - "Overstreet eschews obfuscation."

BRIAN D POWELL
Now & Then Comics
1825 Liberty Rd #216
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Greetings from the Bluegrass State! The new year has brought over a foot of snow and a 35 below zero wind chill, so throw another handful of Turok #1 into the fireplace and heat things up. On to the report.

Overall Market

Water seeks its own level and cream rises to the top. This sums up the new book market. The massive speculation and overbuying seems to have reached equilibrium to more closely reflect the number of readers. The ever increasing numbers of quarter boxes at Conventions reflect this oversupply.

70's Stuff

Kirby is still popular, many bargains still in Mr. Miracle, Eternals, Machine Man, Jimmy Olsen, etc. Marvel magazines are cheap and moving. Shadow (DC) sells very well for me, possibly due to recent news and rumors? Most 70's books are available in high grade, and that's where the action is on these. Neal Adams is sought by young and old. Kiss mags (MCSS #1-5) and Howard the Duck #12 & 13 are requested at every show.

60's Stuff

Marvels sell well in all grades, led by Amazing Spider-Man, X-Men, and Tales titles. Daredevil and Avengers show increasing interest. Miller DD is moving very well again.

DC sells well in all grades, however they're less plentiful than Marvels, especially in high grade. Flash, Green Lantern, Hawkman, Atom, Showcase (of course), and short run spin-off titles like Creeper, Hawk & Dove, Spectre, Sea Devils, and Rip Hunter are among the fan favorites.

Mystery, Sci Fi, western, and humor titles from Marvel, DC, Charlton, and others are starting to gain attention for neat stories, legendary artists, and bargain basement prices. I don't expect this to last, get 'em while they're cool.

50's Stuff

Precode horror and prehero Atlas get tremendous demand in all grades. TV/Movie comics appeal to baby boomers on several levels and I predict many are poised for price increases. Same for the Hanna Barbera cartoon comics. Good Girl art books have a strong following as well.

40's Stuff

Again, all grades sell well. DC & Timely are most sought after (no surprise), but Police/Plastic Man, Fox, and oddball titles do very well too. Many collectors here tend to prefer lower grade reading copies so they can get a whole stack to read instead of one shiny book high grade book.

Closing Comments

Buy what you like and read what you buy! Financial gain is a secondary benefit to the pleasure of reading itself. And try something different once in a while (new or old). Happy Collecting!

BRUCE EDWARDS
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Hello everyone from frigid Louisville, KY where it is some where around zero degrees as I write this! Fantastic Mail Bid Sales #17 is entering it's final stretch, and even though the percentages for each category listed below (average percent of Overstreet Guide currently bid) will likely increase by the end of the auction, they reveal some interesting (but not necessarily surprising) trends:

Marvels, 1960s-present - 50%; Marvels, 1960s only - 60%; DCs, 1960s-present - 50%; DCs, 1960s only - 65%; 1940s-60s non-Marvel, DC - 56%; Dell, Gold Key - 55%; Dell, Gold Key media related - 65%; War Comics - 74%; Crime Comics - 70%; Teen, Romance - 56%; and Independents - 43%; Fanzines, Price Guide, Underground's, etc. - 63%.

One can easily see that newer Marvels, DCs, and Independents are currently less in demand than most other issues. Silver Age DC's are generally sought after with Superman and related titles bringing near guide or more (early Lois Lane's can go for more than guide).

War and Crime comics are especially strong, with media related Dell/Gold Key following close behind. Fanzines from the 1960's and early 1970's as well as underground comix were also especially sought after and remain very cheap when one considers the rarity of these items. Assorted Golden Age to 1960's, Dell, Gold Key, Teen and Romance comics also proved fairly popular.

Next month I'll update these figures and include some actual prices realized. It's easy to see that traditional collector oriented books are the king of the back issue market. Till next time…

JOHN SEDGWICK
Norwich Comic Connection
727 Boswell Ave.
Norwich, CT 06360
(203) 887-0483

Signed Books Soapbox

One of the most popular subjects lately here in the Overstreet Market Reports is the collectibility and investment potential of signed books. An investor pays an extra $10 to $50 for a signed book with a certificate of authenticity. A collector will find a book more valuable when they take it to a convention or special appearance and have it autographed in person. But either way, it is writing on the book! Whether there is a certificate or not, there is no way for a retailer to absolutely confirm the authenticity of the signature. Our store policy is simple; we do not buy or sell signed books, unless the signature is treated as writing on the book. I feel it is much better to be safe than sorry.

Marvel - Daredevil sales are already slowing down here on both the mini and ongoing series. Marvels defiantly caught us off guard: we under-ordered, and trying to find more has proven to be quite a task. Otherwise, Marvel sales remain the same with Beavis & Butthead generating the most excitement!

DC - DC continues to sell well. Superman titles are still holding their own, but Batman is starting to slide rather

> "The Batman/Spawn crossover is generating the most interest."

quickly. Robin and Green Lantern are selling exceptionally well. The Batman/Spawn crossover is generating the most interest. As long as it does not become another Deathmate, with way late books, they have a hot book on their hands.

Others - Ultraverse's Break-Thru story line, while it didn't fly off the shelves, sold well enough to keep us happy. Dark Horse's Sin City is the sizzler, with all the other titles holding their own. The Image titles that make it out on time sell really well! The Valiant fans are keeping this line a steady seller, since nothing mega-exciting is happening at the moment. I have to give Jim Shooter and the Defiant crew an A for effort but a C for actuality. It can't be easy trying to start a new company in today's market, but I feel what we're getting for the $2.50 cover price has room for improvement. The customers remain defiant - one way or the other - about buying Defiant Comics.

Silver Age

With the holiday season over, and the "pay the bill" season beginning, sales have slowed quite a bit. Some bright spots: Incredible Hulk #4 VG $170; X-Men #2 VF $500. Recent acquisitions: Atom #1 FN; Flash Annual #1 VF-; World's Finest #4 on the high side of VG.

Post Gold & Golden Age

Most notable acquisitions this month: Tales of Terror Ann. #3 on the low side VG; Tales from the Crypt #38 VG, #44 VG; Other niceties were Jungle Comics #74, #85, and #96, all FN to VF.

Toys

Fortune smiled upon us when we picked up 180 original Transformers. They retailed from $5 to $20, and they flew off the displays!

Cards

If we could keep them in stock, Marvel Series I would sell for $6 a pack! Demand is still great for Marvel Masterpieces Series II, even at $1.95 per pack, although there has been few requests for the singles.

Here's to a better February… see you next month.

HUGH O'KENNON
2924 Haviland Dr
Richmond, VA 23229-3120
(804) 270-2465

Golden Age

Since my last Market Report, the Golden Age books most requested have been those with Schomburg covers, especially World War II covers. This includes All Select, All Winners, Marvel Mystery, Captain America, and Human Torch. Also perennial favorites Action, Adventure, Detective, Batman, and Superman.

Also (surprisingly) cowboy comics are in demand again with quite a few requests for Four Color Roy Rogers. Last month I had almost as many requests for Roy Rogers Four Colors as any comic.

The demand for Capt. Marvel Adventures is steady to upward and other early Fawcetts are also selling well.

One book that has come on strong in the last several months has been Sub-Mariner. For quite a while, this title was a slow mover with me, but it now seems to have risen from the depths (pun intended) to star status.

As observed in an earlier report, I have been getting a lot of calls asking for advice on how to collect Golden Age comics. The perception I get from this activity is that more and more people are discovering the joys of collecting Golden Age comics.

While a lot of the art in these books is pedestrian and whimsical, some of the covers and interior art approach real greatness. Artists such as Jack Burnley, Lou Fine (my personal favorites), Jack Cole, Will Eisner, Fred Ray, Alex Schomburg, Bob Kane, and many others could hold their own against all comers.

One artist not to be overlooked is Paul Cassidy, who labored in anonymity as the ghost for Joe Shuster in the early days of Superman, and whose work is usually credited to Shuster.

Silver Age

There seems to be a renewed interest in Marvel keys… titles such as Fantastic Four #1, Tales of Suspense #39, Journey Into Mystery #83, Tales to Astonish #27, and the ever popular Amazing Fantasy #15 and Amazing Spider-Man #1. The interest in these keys seems to be driving an awakening interest in many early Marvels, heretofore dormant for six to eight months. As always, high grade is the watchword. Silver Age DC's continue strong, especially Showcase and Science-Fiction titles.

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An Artist To Recommend

There were (of course) many great artists after the Golden Age, and without diminishing any of them, I'd like to recommend one that is not often mentioned in the popular press: I'm speaking of the great Russ Manning. His art is clear, clean, and precise... and in my opinion, he is another overlooked artistic genius. His work appears in many lower priced Dells like Tarzan, Sea Hunt, 77 Sunset Strip, and quite a few others.

Till next time, Happy collecting!

DAN FOGEL
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Comic Detectives
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A big Happy Groundhog's, Valentine's, Abe, & George Day to one and all Overstreet-urchins throughout this February, the mighty month that dares to be short! Allow us this brief diversion before we get to the meaty goodness of our report—when will NBC and ABC move their Questing New Adventures away from the clutches of the Geriatric Avenger, and more importantly, each other, to give these cool new shows room to grow and survive so we VCR totin' gals and pals can get a breather? Personally, we think Darwin can take Jessica 2 out of 3 falls! Great Shades of Elvis! Und zo:

Golden Age

As usual, an inconsistent part of our daily diet — oops, um, our proportional sales. Only thing really new to add is a Comics On Parade (The Captain and the Kids) #40 in GD- for an over guide $18.

Silver Age

Yet another remnant of our rapidly dwindling stock of the famed Magic Lightning Collection, a Hot Rods and Racing Cars #53 in NM went for 1.5 guide at $15. What a freakin' bargain! Other recent sales in this area include: Captain America #110 NM & #113 NM at guide for $50 a piece and an Eighty Page Giant #6 (Superman) VF $50.

Bronze/Modern Age

The Uncanny X-Men #154 NM & #155 NM, each for a bargain $7 the pair; Cerebus Bi-Weekly #7 NM $1.50; New Warriors #4 NM $6.50; Punisher War Journal #13 NM $5; and three copies of One-Fisted Tales #3 NM (3rd printings, Cherry Poptart issue) $3 each.

Toys

A beat-up pair of loose 1960's Batman & Robin bendable figures ("bendies") went for a bargain $13 the pair, and the loose pair of slightly worn 1990 Spider-Man and Daredevil bendies sold for $5 a piece.

See ya next month!

PERRY MARGOLIN
Compleat Comics Co.
1728 Kaahumanu Ave
Wailuku, HI 96793
(808) 242-5875

Aloha and Happy New Year from Maui! After the holiday rush and a five week bout with the flu, we're back.

Needless to report, the comic market is still in flux. There is currently no way for a diligent retailer to gauge the wild shifts in buying patterns, which results in lower orders for most titles. This could well result in shortages of some books later on. My advice - buy what you want now; don't hold out for possible bargain prices later.

Golden/Silver Age

No activity of any note here.

Modern Market:

Marvel - Sales seem to be leveling off, with mid-range titles at astoundingly low levels. Coupled with continued and apparently endemic shipping delays, I feel Marvel might might benefit by re-examining what they are trying to market and by developing and nurturing more consistent writing/art teams. I feel that maintaining market share by increasing the number of titles is not the best way to go.

DC - Although there has been some erosion in sales of the Superman titles (which will likely reverse during the Doomsday mini-series), sales remain steady. I congratulate for doing a consistently good job marketing product.

Image - Spawn, Supreme, and WildC.A.T.S. sell well, and plenty of customers ask about Pitt and Gen 13. All other titles sell at acceptable, but far from previous, levels. I predict the two Batman/Spawn books will do extremely well here. In fact, these are the only books on the horizon through the end of March that stand out as (and we use the word reservedly) "hot" books.

Other publishers - Cerebus sales are up a bit... keep your eye on Blackball . . X and the Legend imprints from Dark Horse appear to have good potential based on pre-publication interest... Defiant's War Dancer? It depends on the quality of the line post-Shooter .. Ultraverse sales are steady, with positive feedback on Solution and Prime, could be time to slow down on introducing new titles... Now's Syphons is a book to watch, maybe tone down the cheese/beefcake panels... Xenya from Sanctuary is on our must-buy list... the same goes for X-O Manowar #25 due to the upcoming Armorines... from Viz, Battle Angel Alita, Guyver, and Ranma 1/2 fly off the shelves each month... Elfquest titles are like the Energizer rabbit - they sell, and sell, and sell...

What's in store for '94?

Looking back over our past reports we tally a 95% accuracy rate based on local sales activity. Look for the revival of a (currently) non-published genre - Jonah Hex II could lead this off. We anticipate the sale of one of the top five publishers this year, as well as a shake-up at a major distributor. We are eagerly anticipating the outcome of January's IADD meeting with the comics' publishers. This could be the year this distributor's organization nudges its clout in the direction of a solution to delays, returns, etc. By the end of the year the market will be stronger, but at pre-spring '93 levels. At least we all should be through (and good riddance to) the feverish speculation of this past year.

Compleat Comics has always been reluctant to raise prices on back issues, and we find that guide prices shoot up, then drop down to the level we've been selling at all along. On a more local note, we'd like to thank both John Romita Sr. and Jr. for doing personal appearances at our shop over the past year or so. Of all the guests we've had, these two stand among the most personable and approachable. Kudos, guys!

We hope you and yours have a healthy and successful year. Read what you buy, and enjoy what you read. Feed your imagination!

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Over the past couple of months, some stability has been returning to the comic book market. There were a couple of light weeks of comic book shipments just after Christmas that provided a welcome breather for fans and retailers alike. This gave some fans the chance to catch up on their new comics purchases and other fans a rare opportunity to spend a bit more on back issues.

Golden Age

The activity here is still relatively slow, due to supply limitations. Sales include All Star #16 FR/GD $100; numerous Classics Comics at guide; and miscellaneous good girl comics (Torchy, Rangers, Planet) in lower grades at guide.

Silver Age

Sales include. Brave & Bold #42 VG $50; Batman #160 VF $20; Dynamo #1 VF $15; Ghost Rider #1 NM $80; Incredible Hulk #181 FN $125; misc. MAD at guide; Spectre #1 FN $23 plus misc. pre-hero Marvels, Amazing Spideys, FFs, Little Luhus, and Dell Four Colors at guide. The not unexpected pick-up in activity here was due to an influx of holiday gift money, so I really can't call this a trend.

Modern Age

Our most recent in-store top-sellers include X-Men, Spawn, Gambit, WildC.A.T.S., Daredevil: Man Without Fear, Marvels, Simpsons, Itchy & Scratchy, the Superman titles, and Cyberforce. Bubbling under this list are Uncanny X-Men, Ren & Stimpy, Green Lantern and Bone.

Marvel still has the dominating market share for new comics here, but they are doing it with a more constant gush of titles than their competitors.

DC Comics are holding steady from the top-sellers through the mid-range titles, but there are some low-end titles that have just stopped selling much of anything (including Deathstroke, Scarlett, Chain Gang War and Eclipso). Interest is constant for Sandman, particularly with the announcement that the series is entering its final major story arc. It should also be noted that sales of early Sandman back issues have slowed due to the constant availability of Sandman trade paperbacks. The Children's

> "Interest is constant for Sandman, particularly with the announcement that the series is entering its final major story arc."

Crusade Vertigo annuals have all sold better than their regular monthly issues, which in today's market is an anomaly worth noting.

Bongo Comics got off to a good start here with all their Simpsons related titles, making the strongest debut of any new publisher in the last year.

Dark Horse Comics are selling pretty briskly here to people who want recognizable characters (Star Wars, Aliens, Predator, Indiana Jones) and good stories (Sin City, Next Men, Monkeyman, & O'Brien in DHP). Demand for recent back issues is steady.

Malibu Ultraverse is suffering from the sophomore jinx. The Rune promotion did not increase sales here, and I feel the line is too large too soon. It seems there are a finite amount of dollars available for these titles, but they are fun to read.

Valiant has settled into a lower, but predictable sales pattern. The Valiant Vision kit has sold very well, as has Ninjak and Magnus/Nexus, but the buzz on this line has almost stopped.

Continued on page 58

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SOLAR 11	$ 14.95

All books come with a letter of authenticity.
CALL FOR OTHERS

Continued from page 54

Jeff Smith's Bone found more new fans over the holidays and sales on #11 are better than ever. There is demand for first printing back-issues, but they are just not coming in.

Image is still kicking, but if the title isn't by an original Image founder, it's likely to be met with a tepid response. Still, there are Image zombies (witness the falling sales on Tribe and Trencher once the Image logo was removed from the cover).

Continuity doesn't have much continuity, but there is still some nice art to be found here. Knighthawk does seem somewhat Spawn-like, though, and his debut in Valeria the She-Bat was greeted with marked indifference here

Market Notes

There are still tons of gimmick covers being published and the effect on sales is shrinking by the minute. The most successful marketing enhancements now are the ones that are coupled with good story and art contents.

Finally, let's keep this whole thing in perspective. There are more people regularly having fun reading and collecting comics today than ever before, with the exception of the few months after Superman died. Without the fun, there is no market…and there are a ton of people having fun with comics now. In short, I recommend more than ever buying what you like for entertainment.

Every month, Overstreet Comic Book Monthly strives to give you accurate information about what's happening in this roller-coaster world of comics. And thanks again to my friendly Flying Colors team for help in getting this info together. Remember, comics don't have to be hot to be cool…and keep those four colors flying!

RANDAL TUSHA
DAVID WOHLERS
Silver & Gold Comics Treasures
1230 S Gilbert Rd. Ste G-12
Mesa, AZ 85204
(602) 545-1772

Hello again comic fans. While most of the country suffers from the blistering cold right now, we her in the Phoenix area have been blessed with temperatures in the high seventies most of the last 3 weeks. Unfortunately, the comic book market has not had a similar heat index. As anticipated, there has been a major slow down in the overall market this month by about 20%. We recently expanded and rearranged our store to allow us to more effectively display merchandise. We hope this expansion will help to stimulate increased sales in February and beyond.

This month we've decided to try a slightly different approach to writing our market report. Instead of simply letting you know general information about all the publishers, we have compiled two lists that we think will be much more informative. We are calling the first list our Rising Stars. That is those items we feel have done very well as retail items or show investment potential. The second list is our Broken Tombstones. These items are so cold in our area that they probably won't show any real heat again unless they are used to start a fire

Rising Stars:

1) **Batman: Shadow of the Bat #'s 21-23** - Sales on these issues have dramatically increased to the point where they almost rival those of our Batman and Detective sales. Though we don't see much speculation potential in this title, it is a very consistent retail series.

2) **Uncanny X-Men #310 & X-Men #30** - Finally the long awaited marriage of Scott Summers (Cyclops) and Jean Grey (Marvel Girl) is at hand. But what wedding would be complete without a bachelor party. Uncanny X-Men #310 also has a guest appearance of Cable who we already know is their child from the future. There are also promo sheets for the new Fleer Ultra X-Men cards which are just coming out. We predict these issues will almost certainly see a price increase in the near future.

3) **Lobo #1 & 2 (regular series) & Lobocop** - In our store, each of these was an instant sellout. Of the non-caped DC heroes, Lobo is the only one making any noise in the cash drawer here. Even the back issues of the previous mini-series have done well. We also sell the Christmas special very well as a back issue

4) **Spawn #16-18** - Wait, these weren't supposed to do well. They aren't McFarlane art. We have been pleasantly surprised with the sales on these issues. This is a good sign that people aren't just buying the comic for the art but also because they like the character

5) **Gambit #1-3** - This series has been just phenomenal in sales for us. We have not kept a single issue of this series even one week past it's release date. On the flip side, Gambit's first appearance X-Men #266 is almost never requested here and has not sold since well before the New Year.

> "I'm not sure if this is a market trend or localized phenomena."

6) **Beavis & Butthead #1** - Although we have yet to actually receive this issue, we have practically committed every copy we ordered to our subscription customers and hold accounts. This one looks to be hot!

7) **Journey Into Mystery #90 to 110** - We have been unable to keep a single issue in this range in the store for more than two weeks regardless of condition or price. I'm not sure if this is a market trend or localized phenomena. I see it as a possible trend, since I have experienced the same response at many of the conventions I do across the country

8) **Iron Man & Sub-Mariner #1** - I'm amazed that this book is still so low in the guide. The story in this issue is an essential connecting point between Tales of Suspense #99 and Iron Man #1 and between Tales To Astonish #101 and Sub-Mariner #1. It is a white cover #1 1960's Marvel with two major long running superheroes, and yet it guides for only $15 more than Harbinger #0 send-away. I'm quite confident that there are 30 to 40 times as many high grade copies of the Harbinger #0 than this much undervalued #1 Marvel. The last copy we sold went for over $200 VF/NM, and that was in late 1992. In August I paid $75 for a FN/VF copy and was quite pleased to get it.

9) **Hologram issues and special covers** - We recently tried a new strategy in our store to increase back issue sales and it has been quite successful. We have laid out two six foot long tables of special cover comics with an average cover price of over $5. These are now flying out of the store at a record pace where they once sat for months in our back issue boxes. I highly recommend this strategy.

10) **Supplies** - Way in the back of the store, back past all the new releases and back issues, past the posters, toys, T-shirts, and videos we have realized our best selling items are now things that we should not have to worry about running out of ever. As much as we are able to keep them in stock, we are always selling bags and boards very well. I highly recommend carrying a full line of supplies in your store. It not only gives customers more options, but it also can improve your bottom line.

Broken Tombstones:

1) **Spider-Man: Mutant Agenda #0** - I have yet to encounter a colder Marvel comic that mentioned the word mutant anywhere in it. The idea behind this concept is inconsistent with the way kids collect comics. Few (none?) of the kids here were willing to wait two months to read a full story or cut the panels out of the daily newspaper and paste them in a comic book. This is destined for the quarter box.

2) **Continuity Comics (All of them)** - What can I say. There isn't even a solicitation by Continuity for March 1994.

3) **Scarlet Witch, Spiderwoman, Silver Sable, She-Hulk** - I don't really know how to say it any other way. Female superhero solo titles rarely, if ever, last. Better luck next time. Maybe a few lessons from DC's Catwoman is in order.

4) **2099 titles (except Spider-Man & X-Men)** - It's usually a safe bet that any title that can't succeed in the present will not fare any better in the future. These titles do not seem to be gaining in interest in any market we have seen recently

5) **Return of Superman cards and collectors tins** - Although it first looked like these might do as well as the death of Superman cards did a year ago, these are now so cold that parents favor stocking stuffers like Teenage Mutant Ninja cards (from the very first movie) over these. We even gave them away as promotional items one week.

6) **Bloodlines annuals** - Fluorescent colored issues have not succeeded here since Hulk #377 was released. Marvel tried adding day-glow colors to their Midnight Son's line and it just irritated most customers. The same could be doubly said for DC's Bloodlines crossover parts.

7) **Marvel UK** - Almost without exception, these titles died here at the starting gate. Even Death's Head II & III & etc. are no longer sought out. Issue #15 sold well, but only because most people thought it was actually an X-Men issue that had a Death's Head appearance

8) **Bloodstrike #1-6** - I haven't liked this series since I ruined three copies trying to make that special thermic blood disappear. Most of the other Image books are doing quite well, except for Shaman's Tears and Pitt. I predict they would both do well if a third issue of either title was released

9) **Tribe #1, 2, and Tribe #0 card set** - One day a kid walked in and bought a pack of the Tribe cards. He opened it and immediately handed the cards back to me. He said I could keep them because he only collects cool cards. I wanted to say that he would never find a colder set to buy than this one but instead I thunked him and sold him a pack of Marvel Masterpiece II.

10) **Dirt bag specials** - One day I was irritated about still having every dirt bag special issue that I ever ordered. In desperation, I tried opening a few of them thinking I could sell the tape, magazine, and comic as separate items. The comics sold, but no one wanted the other two items, even as free gifts. Next time they want us to buy a Dirt Bag special, maybe they could include some real dirt.

Well, that's about it for this month. We'll see you next month same time, same place.

RICH CONLEY
Heroes & Fantasies
749 Barchester
San Antonio, TX 78216
(210) 341-5567

Happy 1994! It is that time of the year when we take a look both backwards and forwards to analyze what really happened in the past twelve months… and to determine in what direction we would like to head in the next year.

Like many other retailers, 1994 was a most interesting year for us. We saw Image Comics take off like a rocket ship, and ultimately crash. We saw DC attempt to emulate the success of Superman's Doomsday series with Batman - with results that were less than spectacular.

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Valiant made several attempts to stimulate the market with new, fancy releases and a serial number coniest that failed to gather any real level of enthusiasm here. Harris couldn't seem to get Vampirella out on time; impairing their chance at success. Topps struck out with the Kirby titles. Lightening put out what I felt was less than first rate material which is apparently being sold only through the speculative channels. And Marvel put a red line through many offerings, including both the UK imports and other longer-term titles.

It was a year that saw a four-fold (according to the major Distributors that I spoke with) increase in sales early in the year; only to be halved, and then some, before the year was finished. I believe that what is left is a very strong, predictable marketplace. There has been a steady increase in comic readership and a steady increase in demand for vintage (pre-1970) material. Today's reader/saver seems more intelligent and less impulsive to me than the new consumers I saw just twelve months ago

"I believe that what is left is a very strong, predictable market-place."

So, we're still very bullish on the comic marketplace - especially as it relates to proven (blue-chip) material. Here's what has been happening in South Texas. .

Golden-Era Material

All Golden Age material is getting harder and harder to acquire. Serious collectors are willing to buy books in nearly any grade to get fillers for their collection. Most sellers are unwilling to let their collections go at traditional wholesale prices. I see this as a sign of another wave of price appreciation for pre-1950 comics. (actually, I see this as a sign for dramatic price increases for pre-1958 material!)

In the past few weeks there has been rising demand for lower-priced, mainstream titles (e.g. ones where the character is still active today). Quite a few DC titles fit this mold; Wonder Woman and Sensation Comics have been hot, and so has World's Finest. All of the Marvel characters in the Fawcett line have been selling well, with Captain Marvel Adventures remaining the strongest title. Timely has remained king here, however, with strong demand for Captain America, Human Torch, All-Winners, All-Select, and Marvel Mystery Comics. The most memorable Golden Age sale last month was a copy of Funny Pages V2 #6 in VG- for $150; and the reason it is memorable is that this book was requested by several collectors and we had to draw straws to determine who would buy it.

With respect to acquisitions, there haven't been many. A small run of Two-Fisted Tales and Frontline Combat are about all that come to mind.

Silver-Era Material

The Silver-Era market tends to be more specialized than the Golden-Era market. While we can count on fairly quick turnaround on almost any Golden Age piece, we have been carrying around a lot of later Silver Age material that is very slow to move. This includes such Marvels as. Spider-Man #30-100, Fantastic Four #51-100, Tales to Astonish #61-101, and Tales of Suspense #60-99. We have advertised these at half-guide and had few takers. DC titles that fall into the same boat include: Aquaman #10-45, Atom #10-45, Justice League #40-100, Brave & Bold #50-100, Flash #140-200, and Green Lantern #30-75.

On the other hand, issues numbered 1-10 continue to sell at a very brisk pace at ever increasing prices. We were only able to hold onto a Hulk #1 in GD/VG for about 36 hours before accepting a $900 offer. The same was true for a Hulk #3, 4, & 6; Fantastic Four #3, 5, & 8; Atom #1; Showcase #15; Spider-Man #2; and Tales to Astonish #44. Although all of these sold quickly, none brought above-guide prices.

Acquisition of Silver-Era material has become a bit more challenging, although there is still plenty of it available. The biggest difficulty in purchasing collections has been the dilemma stated above (slow/dead mid-numbered issues). Since last report, we have picked up a nice selection of high-grade inexpensive DC's (such as Action #300-350; Adventure #325-380; Flash #120-150; Green Lantern #15-35, etc.), a full run of Amazing Spider-Man (averaging about FN), and a six box collection of Dell/Gold Key books in mid-to-high grade. The latter was a big hit at a recent show.

Bronze-Era Material

In general, this is still the slowest moving stuff in our stores. Perhaps it's a continuation of the mid-number problem, or perhaps it's because of the huge price increases that occurred over the past two years for so many of the key issues from the early '70's. Probably the best seller from the Bronze-Age for us is Savage Sword of Conan!

Modern-Era Material

This report began with a quick overview of this portion of the market, primarily because it provides a lot of insight into the strength of the hobby as a whole. Many have suggested that if the new comics market fell apart completely, it would cause a similar effect in the vintage market. For anyone who has been reading our market reports over the years, you can probably guess what I'm going to say again. I contend that the best quality (I know, it's an over-used word) material in terms of exciting story telling (the entire comic art form, both words & pictures) continues to be highest in demand for the long term. Licenses (characters) alone don't mean a lot - there has to be substance and tenacity in order to achieve continued support.

The list, below, represents most of the recent issues that we are currently selling at above-guide prices. The one thing they have in common is a solid storyline which is complimented with appropriate artwork: Fantastic Four #381$9; Marvels #1 $10; Green Lantern #48 $6; Daredevil. Man Without Fear #1 $8; Wolverine #75 $7; and X-Men #6 $5.

I feel the biggest disaster in the new release market is the continued collapse of the special books, such as the Gold/Platinum Valiant, Image, and Vertigo titles. At last count we had accumulated over 200 of these rare commodities and have been unable to use them very successfully as either a sale or promotional item. On the other hand, the books that deserved to have a Gold/Platinum version (e.g. Superman #75, Spider-Man #1; Venom #1, etc.) have enjoyed steady demand and resale value

In this same vein, I strongly recommend that the novice collector/speculator avoid the limited Triumphant books which are being sold under very suspect practices. The situation is quite similar for the Lightening titles which are not enjoying strong reader support, but certain national-level dealers are hyping. If you plan to speculate on titles by these new publishers, I suggest you do it with money that you can lose, and stick to a game plan that locks in profits and minimizes losses by turning the books quickly!

Non-Sport Cards

Similar in some respects to the decline in the new comics market, the new non-sports card market is also experiencing collector-apathy. Some of the highly anticipated releases (e.g. Deathmate, WildC.A.T.S , Creator Universe, etc.) have been major disappointments. We think the biggest reason for this is the continued push to buy products for their speculative value instead of their entertainment value.

The non-sports cards that have enjoyed sustained demand are those that have strong underlying license (known character) support. For example, all of the Star Trek Cards have been solid as has the Marvel Universe & Masterpieces and X-Men issues. Art cards by well-known artists (Boris, Olivia, Frazetta) continue to sell well at original suggested retail prices (which, by the way, is very positive - most entertainment products fall in demand and, therefore price, over time). Price support for most chase cards is fairly strong, although holograms have become a bit over-used. We expect very high and long sustained demand for the Fleer Ultra X-Men series.

That's about all for now. Keep reading, collecting, and sharing your feelings to continue to improve the overall quality of our hobby.

BRIAN & CAROL MORRIS
CB Comics Plus
P O Box 3792
Champaign, IL 61826-3782
(217) 398-0155

As we write this, the temperature in East Central Illinois would have to warm up to bit zero degrees Fahrenheit. But we're happy to type this report, to share our observations with you. More than just an exchange of information, it helps to keep our fingers warm.

DC - It had to happen! Interest in the Superman Family of titles has finally leveled off. Not dropped, mind you, but hit an even keel. The new issues still get looked over by people who catch the new Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman and wonder how the Man of Steel finally got a good hair dye. The first issues of Steel, Superboy, and Supergirl were immediate sell-outs!

The Batman titles are slowing down in sales again. Older fans are disappointed to not have Bruce Wayne as the Caped Crusader while newer fans can't find enough of

"The first issues of Steel, Superboy, and Supergirl were immediate sell-outs!"

their new hero, and sometimes get discouraged from collecting. Sometimes, a title's sales are either a feast or a famine

Speaking of revamps, the first part of Emerald Twilight sold out quickly. However, this has not translated into back issue sales for Green Lantern as the Knightfall, Doomsday, or Reign of the Supermen serials did for their host magazines. Has DC gone to the well once too often? We'll find out in time

Something that has taken an upswing has been L.E.G.I.O.N., Legion of Superheroes, and Legionnaires. This is, no doubt, due to the anticipation surrounding the upcoming Zero Hour mini-series. Sales on the Vertigo books are holding steady.

Marvel - The Mutant titles are still strong sellers as the origin of Cable is revealed and the marriage of Scott Summers and Jean Grey approaches. However, the real leap in sales comes from Wolverine. Since the "Canuckleshead" got his adamantium torn from his body, sales have gone up steadily. Could it be due to a lessening of his previous over-exposure? Could it be due to the fact that without his indestructible skeleton and healing factor that Logan is now a more heroic character? Hey, it's easy to be brave when you know your wounds will close and your bones won't break!

To: COMIC READERS EVERYWHERE

We at ARComics would like to thank each and everyone of you comic readers who have made ARCOMICS PREMIERE, the ARCosmos, the various ARCards, and all of the ARComics promotions such a success . We must, however, apologize to those of you who have been unable to get ARCOMICS PREMIERE. Thanks for letting us know, both by using the ARComics Readers' Correspondence Box and the ARComics Readers' Comment Line. We appreciate your input.

Here is how to get ARCOMICS PREMIERE and ARComics Readers' Choice. Both comics are still available through the normal order process at your favorite comic shop. simply tell your comic retailer to order through Capitol city, Diamond, friendly franks, or heroes world, all of whom have answered us that they will honor all orders for ARComics. Should your comic retailer not be associated with these distribution networks, you might suggest Comics on Call, 1-800-654-Hero.

ARComics Readers' Choice will feature Aegis, with the story by Terrance Henry, art by Ralph Lumley, and cover art by Angel Medina. The cover will again be special, this time featuring three color neon glow-in-the-dark effect. We are really looking forward to seeing this cover.

The ARComics Readers' Comment Line is still open at 1-900-454-COMIC for your comments, and we have new questions this month. there is a lot more coming from ARComics, but for now, if you haven't gotten your orders in, order now! We appreciate your support. ARComics are YOUR comics.

From: *ARComics, Inc.*

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Thank goodness The Siege of Darkness is over! The sales started out slow and leveled off from there. Only the pulling of Dr. Strange from the mainstream Marvel Universe has attracted any attention from our customers as of late. While sales on the Spider-Man titles are still holding up after the Maximum Carnage cross-overs, our customers have shown little added heat over the changes to come to Peter Parker and his new, darker crime-fighting style.

As we did last time around, we have to applaud the new Marvels mini-series. While many comics appear to be more price than content, this project proves that the fans will gladly pay for a package that warrants the higher price. What could follow this quality mini-series? (We have a list!)

Others

The Ultraverse books from Malibu are steadily climbing in sales, even before the current Break-Thru cross-over (who can't see a trend among the companies, with all these multi-book epics). Evil Ernie from Chaos Comics draws more fans with every show we do. Solid creative talents and high production values generate positive word-of-mouth advertising for this book, and the upcoming Lady Death

The Defiant titles have dried up for us, except for The Good Guys which comes very close to capturing the spirit of the early Harbingers. Valiant's Ninjak sells well, mostly on the strength of the Joe Quesada artwork. Among the other Valiant titles, Turok still leads the pack in sales.

1993 ended with Image's sales stabilizing from their rise from early in the year. The titles from the Extreme and Homage studios attract a regular clientele, but the only title that still attracts increased interest for current and back issues is Spawn. We were also pleased with the performance of The Art of Homage Studios.

In Closing

As this new year begins, and the weather warms up, let us all work with our customers to make this our most successful year ever. So until next month, take care and be good!

JIM MACNAUGHTON
Jessie's Comics
631 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 774-2215

And Then There Was One

Greetings this month from the great northeastern state of Maine. It has been several months since our last report because of the crazy chain of events that has been hitting us lately and other comic shops in our area. Three months ago there were four comic shops in our area and today there is only one... us. One shop closed because of health problems with the owner, another has become a video store, another decided to carry only sports cards. We are still here and are looking forward to expanding soon as our business has been building well despite the comic glut that has hit the nation. Well now on with our report.

Atlas/Seaboard - Yes I said Atlas comics, that forgotten publisher from the 70's which I predict will be returning to the comic scene later in this year. If a certain deal has closed by the time this report is published Jason Raschack will be the hot new publisher to watch this year.

Marvel - X-Titles are doing very well along with the Frank Miller Man Without Fear books. It would appear that talent is once again beginning to shine at Marvel. Marvel back issues are the only back issues moving, mostly early X-Men and Frank Miller Daredevil stories. Spider-Man has dropped in sales but I feel confident that fans will return this Summer as they have in the past.

DC - A few Superman and Batman fans are still hanging in there but no demand for the back issues at this time. The new Superman titles are not winning over any new fans here.

Valiant - Sales are still dropping here and back issues just keep on appearing. As far as I can see the stories are getting better but interest here has waned.

Image - Pitt, Maxx, and Spawn! These are the only Image titles we need to carry. Same story at Valiant. The interest in the other titles and new first issues isn't there

Annruel (Shameless Plug For) - Scorpion number one has been doing very well. Matt Sylvester and Lynn Verzoni have done a fantastic job illustrating this book and the story is equally as good, and I am not just saying that because I wrote it. All right, all right... I am just saying it because I wrote it, but give it a chance... you just might like it

Majestic - Legacy and Stat are both steady movers as more and more people discover these titles no complaints in art or story.

Defiant - We have refunded money on all Good Guys that we sold and do not plan on ordering any future issues. Dark Dominion is their best selling title here and for a good reason; great stories.

Closing Soapbox

A major shake up has once again hit this industry and for those who are weathering it, the future will get brighter. The true comic collector will soon see that the time has come to stop buying comics because of the hype or possibility of it increasing in value, but rather collect what you enjoy reading. I challenge everyone to be individuals who

> "Dare to be different and read something you enjoy..."

dares to explore some of the great comics out there that have not hit the "top 100" list. Dare to be different and read something you enjoy, not something because it is "cool today and gone tomorrow." Keep reading and have a great month

DAVE FINN
SUE FOORD
Incognito Comics
14 Starnes Ct. Union Street
Maidstone, Kent UK
ME14 1EB England
0622-683-642

A new year begins. We think it's going to be a good one. We rocketed out of '93 on a high that had been climbing throughout the year. Let's hope this rocket doesn't explode. On with the report...

Golden Age

A surprising shift towards collecting Golden Age books appears to be gathering momentum in the UK. Several staunch Silver Age collectors that we know, have recently turned their back on the Silver Age market, and are now buying high grade Golden Age books. Mostly, these are DC's, but Timely's are also high on their collecting lists. Is this the beginning of a new trend? As usual, Golden Age books are tough to find here, but recent acquisitions include Sub-Mariner #1 VF/VF-, #3 FN; Superman #53 FN-; Black Cat #1 VF/NM (Kansas copy); All Star Comics #3 VF/VF- (restored). Recent Golden Age sales include Sub-Mariner #1 VF/VF- $4,500; Captain America #62 VF- $350.

Silver Age

Acquisitions: include Avengers #1-100 and Fantastic Four #4-120, in average VF condition. Incredible Hulk #102-130 in VF/NM and Thor #126-200 in VF/NM are other examples. Also a VF/NM (restored) Showcase #4 with very little work done.

Sales as always are strong, especially for the higher grade books. Sales include Avengers #1-370 (with 22 issues missing, in FN to NM), $3,500, with issue #1 a nice FN+; Fantastic Four #5 FN $625. More and more collectors here are dipping their toes into Silver Age collecting, including many younger collectors. Even though they may not be able to afford the higher ticket books, they seem to prefer to have an original, instead of a reprint (even if the grade is low). Silver has never been more solid for us.

Bronze Age

Little or no movement in this market at the moment. The small rush towards the end of last year, seems to have blown itself out. Perhaps there will be another surge later this year.

Modern Comics

Since the Turtles cartoon series, there has been very few comic-book related programs on UK television. Suddenly, we are hit with the Batman and X-Men animated series, along with the Lois and Clark live action show at the same time. Suffice to say, we now have no issues of Batman Animated or X-Men TV show comics in stock what so ever, and Superman titles sales continue to rise.

We're very pleased here, not just for the higher sales, but because more younger people are finding that the comic books, as well as the TV shows, can be fun. Seeing the shows, brings kids to the comic stores, and this exposes them to the many other comic books available, which can be just as good as those on TV that don't have their own programs.

From a sales point of view, the Defiant books appear to be failing here. Sales have dropped as more issues have come out. Maybe some of the strange rhetoric is to blame. Marvel's Heavy Hitters haven't hit anything, though Sachs and Violens might whenever issue #2 makes it.

The gem of the new year though has to be the Marvels mini-series. Great art, great story, and almost worth $5.95 just for the fun in sporting all the cameo appearances, including the DC characters.

The UK Scene

The New Year is well upon us, and slowly easing ourselves back into our comic show roster. We generally average 65-70 shows a year across England. There are definitely varying buying habits, across the country, with books which are dead in one city, being very popular in another.

Some books, however, are popular nationally. We could have sold 500 copies of Daredevil #319 at $15 each over the Christmas and New Year, if we had the copies. Prices here on back-issues, are generally similarly priced with Overstreet in the US, but there are still some exceptions. For instance, it is difficult to get any more than about $220 here for a NM Hulk #181, although it Guides at $300. And it's still totally impossible to get any more than $20-$22 for a NM copy of Sandman #1. It's still a very hot book, but the price has stuck at about $20.

That's all for now. Maybe we'll see a few of you at the Great Eastern New York show in February. Bye.

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Hello and welcome to the land of Mickey and Donald! Holiday sales were good but not great. We are glad to be into the new year. Hopefully our tourist trade will bounce back and make 1994 the great year we all want it to be.

New Product

Long standing titles from Marvel and DC continue to hold their own. Many of the recently introduced books (2099, Nightstalkers, Deathlok, to name a few) have dropped off considerably any may not be with us that long. I have been complaining about the glut of new titles for a while now, and my feelings have not changed - lets produce fewer books and concentrate on improving the quality of those that remain.

DC's Superman titles are leveling off in sales as are Knightsquest. I feel that intelligent customers tire of a long drawn out storyline. The best book from Marvel in recent memory has got to be the excellent Marvels. Well written and drawn, it proves that the "House of Ideas" can still produce at a very high level when they choose too. What a great book! Sales for new Valiant, Image, Dark Horse, and Ultraverse remain steady, if not spectacular.

Recent Back Issues

(1970-1993) - We receive requests each week for X-Men #266 and Avengers Annual #10. Other Marvels and DC's that sell from this period would also be first appearance or origin issues. We are also seeing an increase in sales for what most people would consider non-mainstream independent titles. Sales: X-Men #266 NM $28; Superman #75 bagged $20; Amazing Spider-Man #98 VF $40, #300 NM $50; Vampirella (Harris) #1 NM $18; Lost In Space #1 $4; Rocketeer Mag #1 NM $10.

Silver Age

(1955-1969) - Our only major acquisition of Silver comics in the past month was a very high grade run of Sea Devils including the Showcase issues. DC Comics in this grade are tough to find. Someday we'll run across that elusive high grade run of Showcase and Brave & Bold. Oh Well! Convention sales were a bit flat in the past month. Most of

> "Someday we'll run across that elusive high grade run of Showcase and Brave & Bold."

our sales were thru mail order or in store. Results. Amazing Spider-Man #14 NM $1,000. Fantastic Four #52, 53 NM $400; Capt. America #109 VF $40. Journey Into Mystery Annual #1 FN/VF $40; Iron Man & Subby #1 FN $68; Giant Size X-Men #1 VF/NM $200; Superboy #49 GD $20.

Golden Age

(1935-1954) - Nothing came into the store or the conventions this past month. A few sales to report. Homer Cobb #1 VF $35; Popeye Cartoon Book FN $80; All American #79 FN $150.

Artwork & Toys

Acquisitions: Two Charles Schulz Peanuts originals, one Sunday and one daily. Also a beautiful 1955 Chein Disneyland Roller Coaster. Toy sales were flat during Christmas. We are hoping for better in the new year. Sales results: Star Wars millennium Falcon, loose $45; Darth Vader mask $25; ABU Animation drawing $125; pair of Ariel Animation drawings $295; group of Hot Wheel cars $240

That's all for now. If visiting Disney World stop by and say hello!

TODD MCDEVITT
MATT BRADY
New Dimension Comics
20550 Route 19
Evans City, PA 16033
(412) 776-0433

Prices are going up again! It looks like the average Marvel book will cost between $1.50 and $2.50 starting in March. DC is still the bargain of the big two, with more titles around $1.50. Is there an explanation for this gradual price increase? It will be interesting to see what our customers cut back on because of the increase. And I can remember going to the newsstand with $1, buying three comics, and having change left over. Times, they continue to change. Pass me my Gentol, and on with market news

Silver Age

Not much high grade, but we can move through some older collections. We recently picked up a run of Avengers, and they moved pretty quickly. Other than the regular sellers, (key Marvels - especially Spider-Man, some Showcases, and some Kirbys) our Silver Age market tends to be kind of sluggish at home. No problem selling at big shows though.

Current Age

DC: In my opinion, the overall highest quality books being put out by a major company today. Our customers are starting to notice as well. Bat-Books: Fans here want Bruce back. Wonder Woman, Flash, Green Lantern, Teen Titans, Legion, and Legionnaires have shown an increase in quality and consequently an increase in subscriptions in our stores. Customers complaining about the endless "grim and gritty" stories? I Recommend some of these "flagship" DC titles, they are fun to read. Remember when comics were fun?

Vertigo's still sell well to their audience. Sandman draws a few new readers here and there, but its hard to get some involved in the middle of the last story. Hellblazer is our best Vertigo seller, with Sandy in second. Swamp Thing is up with Morrison's stories.

Older readers (those who can remember Earth- 1, 2, A, B, etc.) are snapping up Zero-Hour lead-ins for some clue as to what's going to happen. We've seen steady increases in Legion of Super-Heroes, Legionnaires, and Valor.

Marvel: Of course the big sellers continue to be the X-Titles. Uncanny and X-Men lead the pack, with X-Factor second and X-Factor third. We're starting to see interest pick up in the Adam X or X-Treme character. He's still pretty mysterious as to origins, and rumors of a third Summers brother bouncing around the Marvel Universe make every new X-character a candidate. My guess continues to be Gambit. How about a third Summers brother who's a normal human? Call him X-Ception.

The rest of Marvel remains as they had hoped with the death of Spidey's parents. Daredevil has showed some slow down after Fall From Grace, as readers realize that they were fooled about Murdock's death. Marvels continues to sell very well for us despite the hefty price. Some of our customers showed interest in the series, but tell us they'd rather wait for the cheaper (?) trade paperback (if it comes out). As some point out, TPBs give you the entire story without month to month delays and without advertisements in the middle of the story.

Marvel top sellers: X-Books, Hulk, Spider Books. Marvel mid: not much, 2099. Marvel bottom sellers: just about everything else. (We still hope for Avengers to pick up, but with the future story lines, it doesn't seem likely any time soon.) While Marvel books do make up for a majority of our books sold, total sales have been in a decline for some time now. And continue.

Dark Horse: A strong number three in total sales. Legend books go fast, and everyone is waiting for Hellboy. Sin City is still very hot here, and feelings are mixed for DH's superheroes. Other "properties" books (Robocop,

> "Sin City is still very hot here, and feelings are mixed for DH's superheroes."

Aliens, Predator, etc.) sell well to their core audience, but don't reach across genre lines.

Image: Again, most titles are in decline, except for the consistently on-time books (Spawn, Maxx, Savage Dragon). Despite their marketing efforts, WildC.A.T.S. and Cyber Force sell only moderately well here. Everything else pretty much sits on shelves.

Defiant: One of our customers won the Good Guys contest, and if it wasn't for that, these books probably wouldn't move well at all. Bless Jim Shooter's heart for trying, but I just don't think the lightning was on the mark this second time.

Malibu: The surprise company of '93 looks good in '94. Quality (to everyone's surprise) does sell, and Malibu takes advantage of that. The whole line does pretty well for us, and Bravura looks hot.

Valiant: Attention! Attention! The speculators are gone, but the books still sell. Our subscriptions have boiled down to a core audience, with no big breakaway books except Ninjak which moves fast.

Hot and on the Horizon:

JBNM: Power, Gen 13, Damage (a treat for young and old DC fans), Danger Unlimited, Hulk #417 (Rick's bachelor party!), Books of Magic, oh and these other books—Spawn/Batman and Batman/Spawn.

Final Thought

While this report may have painted a dismal picture, there are still books out there that are worth your money. Try something new. Ask your retailer what he/she recommends. As your mom said, try it, you might like it. Until next month

MICHAEL TIERNEY
The Comic Book Store
9307 Treasure Hill
Little Rock, AR 72207
(501) 227-9777

Hello again from Arkansas. The middle of Winter usually means a slow market for the comics industry, but prospects seem much brighter this year. Collectors are still very active in the back issue market, while new comic sales have leveled off to stable patterns. Marvel is, by far, number one in both markets here, with DC clearly second. If the problems of misstated and late books were corrected, it could be another banner year for the industry. Timeliness enables retailers to recognize what is popular, and what used to be. Natural selection by consumers will always decide the issue of poor quality

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Entries may consist of stories and/or character portfolios. The ten winning stories and portfolios will be published in our Summer 1994 annual. Only entrants of stories will be eligible for the ten contracts. Cash prizes will be awarded to three outstanding entries in each category.

Stories must be black-and-white and may not exceed 20 pages. Portfolios may be B/W or color and must consist of a character sketch and biography. Processing fee is $25 for stories and $10 for portfolios.

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This contest is not open to employees of Mermaid Publications or their immediate families. Name, address, phone number and full processing fee must accompany each entry. Entries are non-returnable and become the property of Mermaid Publications. We are not responsible for lost, damaged or late entries. We reserve the right to increase or decrease the number of contracts offered according to the quality of entries received. Judges' decisions are final.

Silver Age

Sales: Amazing Spider-Man #1 PR $202.50, #3 FN $30, #4 GD $75, #38 Near Fine $14.25, #108 MT $15; Incredible Hulk #102 VF $75; Superman #180 VF $15, Uncanny X-Men #13 VF $39.50

Bronze Age

Sales: Daredevil #159 NM $12.75, Punisher-War Journal #1 MT $20; Wolverine Vol 1 #1 MT $25, Vol 2 #1 MT $29.25; Uncanny X-Men #94 NM $170, #94 VF/NM $110, #121 NM $26, #201 NM $19

Modern Age

Sales: Batman-Sword of Azrael #1 MT $17.50; Death of Superman Platinum TPB MT $50.

Marvel: Top selling story lines are the Daredevil Fall From Grace and Punisher Suicide Run. The X-Men Wedding storyline isn't drawing any involvement from collectors not already interested in the series. However The X-Men Adventures cartoon show does seem to be bringing the next generation of comics readers on line. The biggest recent disappointment was Iron Man #300, and no one here has missed the Uk books Marvel stopped publishing. The rapidly declining 2099 line got a much needed bounce from the Fall of the Hammer storyline. The new Marvels series has done very well and drawn rave reviews for the painted illustrations. The most anticipated titles have been Beavis & Butthead and Forceworks.

DC: Superman is still powering along undaunted at the same levels the line has been at since the Reign storyline ended. Batman: Knightfall is still a strong second, but slowing, with related books like Catwoman and Robin doing well. No one locally seems to remember the days when the New (Teen) Titans were a DC's flagship.

Ultraverse: The entire Ultraverse line has held steady, with gradual growth. Mantra and Prime seem to be the most popular.

Cards

Marvel Universe Series II is still strong. The Fleer Ultra X-Men Cards have been eagerly anticipated

Comics with gimmicks...

...no longer guarantee extra sales, but it is good to see publishers continue to enhance the overall quality and image of comics. Our industry used to lag behind Paperbacks and Magazines in the use of available technology, but, with all the recent competition, once conservative publishers have turned into innovative leaders. That wraps it from Arkansas

JOHN M HAUSER
P O Box 51673
New Berlin, WI 53151-0673
(414) 789-8927

Winter has set in here in Wisconsin. The mail order market has remained strong. It is more difficult to travel to shows in the Winter. This makes ordering through the mail much more appealing.

Investment Advice

At the local convention level there is little demand for old books. The majority of the small convention market seems to be in new books and cards. I see people trying to invest in the new market in an effort to make a quick profit. I feel older material is a much safer long term investment than current material.

Golden Age

The market seems to be picking up. More and more long time Silver Age collectors are turning to those older Golden Age books. Batman and Timely's are leading the pack in market demand here. Sales. Captain America #28 VG/FN $250, Flash #85 VG/FN $200, and Action #24 GD/VG $175.

Pre-Code Horror

These books are still my top sellers. The lower the grade the faster they sell. This is a welcome change from Silver Age where the opposite is true. Recent sales: A near complete run of Journey into Fear and Fantastic Fears #5 VG-$100

50's & 60's books

Melvin the Monster has been one of my most popular titles. Cheap romance books continue to sell very well. Recent sales: Melvin the Monster #1 FR $5 and Space Western #45 FR $16.

Silver Age

Marvel is leading the pack. Spider-Man comics in any grade are selling very well. The overall market for Marvels has stayed strong for three months now. Recent Sales: Fantastic Four #1 VF/NM $1,000; Amazing Fantasy #15

"Spider-Man comics in any grade are selling very well."

GD/VG $1,500; X-Men #1 FN- $800; Incredible Hulk #1 FN+ $1,500; and Incredible Hulk #1 FR $350. Recent DC sales are World's Finest #75 GD $25, Strange Adventures #71 GD/VG $11; and Our Army at War #99 VG- $16.

In closing

I would like to say hi to all my fellow collectors out there. I hope we make an effort this year to meet new collectors and help them find a book or two on their want list. Happy collecting.

JOHN P TINKESS
Another Dimension Comics
324 10th Street NW
Calgary, Alberta
T2N 1V8 Canada
(403) 283-7078

As I write this, it is the dead of Winter in Calgary and the ground is covered with snow. What better reason to stay inside and share my viewpoint of the comics industry will all of you loyal Overstreet readers.

A climate of change has been prevalent over the past few months as we all try to recover from the explosion of new titles and universes last Summer. After all the hype surrounding last year's new launches, most here have ended up gravitating back toward the major characters and most popular creators.

Marvel - After a few projects that fell short in early '93 (Heavy Hitters, Marvel UK), Marvel has begun to regain the confidence of its many fans here. The final issue of Daredevil: Man Without Fear just arrived and the entire series has been a tremendous success in our stores. Frank Miller's expanded retelling of the origin of the character he seems born to write grew in sales month after month. Issues #1 & #2 sell quickly at $4 US ($5 Can) each and we have sold out of several re-orders of the later issues. Not to be outdone by a spin-off, the regular monthly Daredevil title has realized a strong increase in demand during the "Fall From Grace" storyline. Low initial orders have made the early parts of the series extremely hard to find.

Even after the less than spectacular performance of Infinity Crusade last year, several recent crossover storylines have sold out. Blood and Thunder (Thor), Bloodties (X-Men/Avengers), Fall of the Hammer (2099) and Suicide Run (Punisher) have all sold well beyond our expectations. Even slumping sales on the Midnight Sons titles received a brief boost from the Siege of Darkness cross-over. Another surprise hit is the title Marvels. There has been a great deal of price resistance on high-end titles recently, causing original orders to be modest. But once fans got a chance to see the beautifully painted artwork, sales blossomed. Several re-orders later we are sold out again and waiting for more.

Other Marvel titles doing well right now include; Fantastic Four, Incredible Hulk (consistently one of Marvel's best books), Ren & Stimpy, Thunderstrike, Transformers: Generation 2 (there seems to be a lot of closet Transformers fans out there), Wolverine, the X-titles (particularly the upcoming wedding issues) and anything by Stephen Platt.

DC - Sales of the Superman and Batman titles remain strong and steady. Recent back issues have slowed down a bit though, now that they are available in trade paperbacks.

The biggest surprise from DC lately was the Metal Men limited series. Done in a style reminiscent of the 60's version, this series captivated both long time fans and new readers alike. There is definitely a market for many of DC's Silver Age characters and I hope we'll see more books of this kind soon.

For a different spin on some classic DC characters, fans need look no further than the Golden Age. The long wait between issues #2 and #3 hasn't seemed to diminish the demand for this series.

The Vertigo line is still doing very well with Sandman leading the way. We had high expectations for the Children's Crusade cross-over and were not disappointed. Even with orders close to Sandman numbers, most parts have almost completely sold through.

Overall, DC hasn't produced mega-hits like the Death of Superman lately but have consistently produced quality material month after month. A year ago DC's sales were two-thirds that of Marvel in our stores, but recently DC has passed Marvel in overall sales here.

Image - Books by McFarlane or Jim Lee are still top sellers but most of the others continue a slow decline in sales. Demand for Image back issues has also slowed down with the exception of Spawn, which is still in very high demand

Valiant - Has yet to recover from the mass exodus of investors over the past few months. A few bright spots include solid sales on Ninjak, Valiant Vision, and the Tim Truman Turok issues.

Malibu/Ultraverse - After the initial rush, demand has been dropping for the Ultraverse titles. Though the books are well produced, it seems to be a case of too many super-hero universes on the market. The upcoming Bravura line is generating a lot of interest and hopefully the big name creators involved can maintain interest over the long haul. Currently our best selling titles are Star Trek: Deep Space Nine and the Mighty Magnor.

Dark Horse - Comics Greatest World seems to be suffering the same problem as the Ultraverse, namely good books getting lost in a sea of super-heroes. Dark Horse's licensed titles (Aliens, Predator, Robocop, etc.) enjoy consistent (but not spectacular) sales. The new Legend imprint has performed very well. Already a solid seller, John Byrne's Next Men has enjoyed a decent increase in sales during the Faith mini-series. Frank Miller's Sin City has been a big success, even exceeding our high expectations.

Independents

Bone! Even with all the issues constantly being reprinted

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we find ourselves "Bone-less" far too often. I'd give you an update on first print back issue prices but I can't find any to sell! Also Bongo Comics have entered the market with a bang! So far these new Simpson's comics have met with great success, outselling most Marvels and half the Image line here.

Golden Age

Very difficult to find in this area, but whatever we do find sells immediately. Recent sales: Whiz Comics #82 VF $75 US ($100 Can), #83 FN and #91 FN $56 US ($75 Can) each

Silver Age

Spider-Man is definitely king in this area. I could sell NM runs of Spider-Man every day of the week if I could find them. We also have been seeing fewer and fewer quality books lately. Issues in VG to FN shape are fairly common and generally slow to moderate sellers at guide. Lower grades (FR to GD) usually sell quickly at or slightly below guide as an inexpensive way to fill in runs. Exceptions to

> "We also have been seeing fewer and fewer quality books lately."

the above are certain DC's (especially Superman or Batman) and Gold Key westerns which sell well in any grade. Recent sales: Amazing Spider-Man #80 VF $20 US ($25 Can) and a number of Turok and Tarzan (Gold Key) issues in the VG to FN range at guide.

Back Issue Modern Age

Not much to report here. Issues from the past year (or so) sell fairly well but earlier issues are slow to moderate. A few exceptions are Sandman, Savage Sword of Conan #1 to #20, Jonah Hex, Star Trek, and ST Next Generation. We've also seen some increased interest lately in some older movie tie-ins like Star Wars and Indiana Jones (?!) from Marvel. Recent sales of note: Amazing Spider-Man #200 NM $20 US ($25 Can); Star Wars (Marvel) #1 VF/NM $15 US ($20 Can) and Venom #1 (gold) NM $55 US ($75 Can).

That's it for now. See you next month!

MICK RABIN
P O Box 15112
San Diego, CA 92175-0112
(619) 284-3730

Acquisitions

Generally very slow is all I can say. The river of Silver and Gold is drying up in a serious way! Tales to Astonish #64 NM $58; GI Combat #44 FR $10, #68 VG $8.50; Our Army at War #102 VF $32, #104 FN/VF $28, #112 VF $35, #183 NM- $6, #242 NM $5; Strange Adventures #117 FN+ $300; Superman #45 VF $350; Tales of the Unexpected #15 FN/VF $80; Flash Premium Pinback Button: a ridiculous sum of money.

Sales

Here are a few prices realized. Action #255 VF/NM $75; Amazing Spider-Man #83 NM $32, #84 NM $32, #88 NM $32; Batman #237 NM $22; Brave and the Bold #29 GD $40, #30 VF+ $1,100, #60 FN $18, #79 VF/NM $23, #61 NM- $56; Detective #229 NM- $300; Flash #109 VF/NM $400, #113 VF+ $250, #119 VF+ $120, #122 NM $110, #124 NM $100, #126 NM $75, #132 NM $75, #134 NM $75, #136 NM $75, #138 VF/NM $53, #145 NM $44, #173 NM $25; Green Lantern #7 NM $210, #45 NM $55; Hawkman #9 VF/NM $45; Incredible Hulk #122 NM $20; Our Army at War #153 $68; Our Fighting Forces #155 VF/NM $30; Showcase #7 GD $55, #27 VG/FN $90, #32 VF/NM $195; Superman #149 VF+ $70, #199 VF+ $85; Swamp Thing #1 (2) VF/NM $38 each; Tales to Astonish #36 NM- $400; Thor #162 NM $35.

I placed an ad recently with a wide assortment of high-grade Silver Age DC's, Marvels, and Dell/Gold Keys. The stuff that sold the best was, far and away, DC from the early Silver Age. I've noticed a tendency for people to turn their noses up at Silver Age in favor of Golden Age ("where the big boys are"). Don't get me wrong… I love Golden Age, but if you like "rare" collectibles you don't have to go back 40+ years. For example, how often do you see a truly high grade copy of Brave and the Bold #23 for sale? This lack of availability in grade is true for thousands of Silver Age books. At any rate, the high grade DC's flew. Some high grade non-key Marvels also went, but not as fast.

Later on and greetings to Room 4.

GREG HARDER
The Collector's Slave
156 Imperial Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2M 0K8 Canada
(204) 237-4428

Hello and welcome to another report! As promised here is the long awaited report from Styx Comics. It was a pleasure to talk to Sherry, (retail co-ordinator) of the three Styx locations), she is pleasant and very knowledgeable. Enjoy.

(Sherry's Report begins) As I look forward to another year in the comic industry, I have been graciously given the opportunity to voice my views on the current status of the market as I have been experiencing it. As the new year begins, I hope to see less of the flash and glitter on the covers and more quality time given to the actual story inside. Although cover enhancements still sell well, it would be to nice to encourage customers to buy new books based on their intellectual, artistic, and entertainment merits alone. Time will tell…

DC - Thus far, Superman and Batman sales have gradually tapered off, with the Superman titles selling a few more copies than Batman. Keeping in line with the Batman titles is Catwoman and Robin which have enjoyed fairly brisk sales. Sandman is still selling very strong as with the Children's Crusade titles. Hellblazer with the fantastic painted covers by Fabry, seems to have picked up slightly in sales and sells out almost every month. What I enjoy seeing is the female customer picking up these titles in the Vertigo line. There finally seems to be some books that have captured the interest in more than two or three female readers.

Marvel - The main focus in the Marvel line right now seems to be among the X-Men titles. Our back issues seem to be selling out faster than we can get them into stock. With the marriage of Jean and Scott, these titles are sure to be in even bigger demand. Also, sitting at the top is the current Daredevil: Man Without Fear story line. With issues #1-3 out of sight, #4 & 5 are disappearing rapidly. Due to the fantastic story line and great art, this book has captured the interest of fans everywhere. Another pleasant surprise from Marvel has been Marvels #1 & 2, selling out on original orders as well as reorders. One title that seems to sell out almost before it hits the shelves, is Moon Knight. With this title's familiar art splashed across the pages, it was sure to be a quick sell out.

Image - Spawn! Spawn! Spawn! With this title being the biggest seller over all, it continuously sells out in back issues and out sells other new issues every month. The art is eye catching and the story is enjoyable. With the Batman/Spawn crossover on its way, I'm sure sales will increase even more. Now if only the other titles in the Image line would appear on time and be as successful.

Alternatives and Independents - Over the last couple of years, alternative new issues, back issues, and graphic novels have captured a larger audience. The one book which we can't seem to keep on the shelves is Jeff Smith's Bone. It offers a refreshing change from the mainstream and customers are constantly asking where they can find back issues.

Cerebus issues are still selling very well, with interest increasing in the Japanese animation books and videos.

Finally, the biggest independent seller as of late is the Bongo Comics line. The fascination with the Simpsons characters doesn't seem to be slowing down at all. All their titles have been selling very well for us. Customers young and old seem to be enjoying these titles equally.

On a final note

One suggestion I would like to make to the retailers who order alternative books, is to make a separate section for these titles. Since we have given Fantagraphic, Antartic Press, Viz, and other companies their own place in the store, they sell quite a bit better. Try this out if you have the room. You could be pleasantly surprised!

GEOFFREY PATTERSON
TIMOTHY RILEY
Geoffrey's Comics
15530 Crenshaw Blvd
Gardena, CA 90249
(310) 538-3198

Golden Age

Sales have been slow, so slow. People are looking for such pristine quality and it seems they all want the same books. Then they want a big, big discount to boot, which is tough because you have to pay so high just to get the comics in the first place! Acquisitions: Some early DC's (Action

> "People are looking for such pristine quality and it seems they all want the same books."

comics, Batman, and Superman—all published during the second world war. Beautiful books!); also some early NM Hopalong Cassidys.

Silver Age

We priced 3/4 of our less than VF Silver Age at half price and they still sell slowly.

Modern Comics

Those bright new books - every retailers big money maker - sure don't sell like they did about 6 months ago. Out here in the LA area aircraft factories are laying off employees. This is certainly a factor. What is selling?

Ultraverse and Valiant are steady and their contest and gimmicks and promotions seem more far sighted and interesting than those of the bigger companies.

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Dark Horse has the best quality control, but we only get three stock Star Wars and Frank Miller with any regularity.

[illegible] more books that you just can't sell without a big name. There are some really pretty books like Wonder Woman and Batman that people here won't pick them up. Comic conventions and Batman are showing way down.

Omega has gone down more than 50%, but to be fair, it has everybody else.

Starved - Cyclops and Jean Grey marry this month. I could be a big one!

Returnable Status

The greatest thing in recent months for this old retailer is Diamond and Capital giving comics (shipped over 30 days late) a returnable status.

Autographed Comics...

...have become hot but so overpriced. I think The Home Shopping Network is doing a real disservice to the hobby in this area!

Penthouse Comics

Hmm! Some impressive talent too

Topps has a lot of money, but could use a little more comic book sense.

Defiant had a good idea with the Good Guys but then there was that pesky controversy about favoritism towards Mile High. I like Jim Shooter, but this puts me in the awkward business of selling advertisements for my competitor across town. We felt the way to "protest" (so to speak), was not to order Good Guys. And I also hired some local kids to go over & bend the competitors comics (Just Kidding, Chuck!)

Till next time, you partners need help? We'll be there!

TONY STARKS
4100 Forrest Green Drive
Newburgh, IN 47630-2998
(812) 858-5516

Greetings comic lovers! As I write this report, Southern Indiana is in the grip of one of the coldest January's ever - temperatures barely above zero and wind chill factors of some 20 to 35 below zero! Despite the cold, attendance and sales at a show in Evansville were pretty good, but loading and unloading one's vehicle was a "chilling" experience. "Close The Door" was the most popular expression

Silver Age

Inexpensive (Under $15) Silver Age books continue to sell very well. In fact, inexpensive books sell well in all grades. More expensive books in either low or high grade sell best. The middle grade expensive items, on the other hand, seem to pricey for the bargain shoppers... and not nice enough for the investors. Recent sales include: Journey Into Mystery #87 GD $15; Mystery in Space #53 FR $50; Strange Tales #101 FR $50; X-Men #1 VG/FN $600; and Avengers #4 GD $110.

1970's Comics

Sales of 70's books were kind of hard to figure in my last ad. Main stream Marvel titles like Team-Up and Two-In-One just sat at 35% off guide, but monster titles like Werewolf by Night, Tomb of Dracula, and odd ball 70's DC's like Plastic Man, Ragman, Blitzkreig, and Kamandi sold at near guide. Actually, the DC's sold much better than the Marvels, with significant sales of in titles like Action, Superman, Flash, and Batman (take a look at the prices on these, you can buy a 20 year old copy of Action for about the same as this months issue). X-Men between #'s 94-150 are selling very well once again. Compare the price of these against issues just printed a year ago, and you can see why they are selling well. Sales of note: The

> "X-Men between #'s 94-150 are selling very well once again."

hot news here is the sale of a NM All-Star Western #10 for $180 (3x guide). Also several copies each of Jonah Hex #1 and Kamandi #1 at $25 and a NM Legion of Monsters #1 (magazine) at $12.

Signed Comics Controversy

I am currently looking into how other hobbies set a value on signed collectibles. I'll hopefully have more to report next month, but so far it looks like the sports card hobby sets a value on a signed card based on the value of the persons autograph, for which there is a price guide.

The value of an autograph is primarily based on 1) popularity; 2) is the individual still alive; and 3) Does the person routinely do a lot of signings. Only signed items that came that way from the manufacturer are assigned a value in the price guides - otherwise the value of a signed card is based on the value of the autograph. I found it interesting to learn that many sports card collectors (just like many comic collectors) consider an autograph on a card as a defect, especially on the so called "premium" cards. So I guess the question of the month for the Home Shopping Network must be "what does Jerry Siegel's autograph guide for?" and "is the guide value close to the $330 that was charged?"

Until next month.

BILL PONSETI
MATT NELSON
More Fun Comics
8200 Oak Street
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 865-1800

Greetings comic lovers! Here again I sit, pen in hand, attempting to capsulize what, for us has been a month of whirlwind activity on the back issue comics scene.

Overview

Acquisition and sales of large amounts of Golden and Silver Age collections have been the catalysts of a fast-paced month here. During the month of December, we were fortunate to acquire a large collection of Silver Age Marvel comics which spanned the pre-hero period through about 1969. This collection represented most of the major Marvel titles, and was a big hit with our Silver Age customers.

We also located a collection of about 150 Golden Age comics in neighboring Mississippi. This collection consisted of a wide variety of publishers and titles. The grades on the books ranged from fair to very fine+. These books too, have been fast sellers with our usual Golden Age clientele and some of our other customers who happened to find some of these books fascinating. These types of events in the comics hobby display just how strong the field is and that the outlook for continued growth looks outstanding.

Golden Age

I can foresee no decline in collector interest in this area of collecting. The overwhelming majority of our back issue sales for the month of December and the first half of January have been Golden Age and Post-Golden Age comics. Many of our Silver Age customers have also jumped on the bandwagon as they witnessed the attraction of collectors to Golden Age comics. I guess the only bad news is that with all of these new Golden Age collectors, finding those elusive issues is going to get tougher than ever.

I read another market report in last months Overstreet in which the advisor asked which book would be more desirable, an Action Comics #1 in Good or an Amazing Spider-Man #1 in NM. I feel there is no comparison. More copies of the Spidey in NM exist than the total number of Action one's in all grades! Also I have a small bone to pick regarding some very undervalued Golden Age books: I feel Whiz Comics #25 should guide for approximately double its current guide level, and I think it's time the ultra-rare Continental titles got the respect they deserve, $350 for a NM Suspense #3! I think not!

Some Recent Sales: Batman #2 VF- $3,500 cash/$500 trade; Captain America #20 VF/NM $700; USA #4 VF $650; Human Torch #37 FN- $100; Nellie the Nurse #'s 15-16 (Mile High) $150 each; Batman #61 VF $250; Sub-Mariner #39 VG+ $100; All-American #46 GD $60; Gangbusters #17 VF $100; Buck Rogers #6 GD $75; Wings #77 FN- $25; many others. Recent Acquisitions: Human Torch #2 (#1) VG/FN; Sub-Mariner Comics #1 VG; Red Raven #1 VG; Captain America Comics #1 VG; Young Allies #14 FN/VF; Marvel Tales #96 VF/NM, #108 VF; Namora #3 GD+; Famous Funnies #214 GD/VG; Four Favorites #22 FN, Planet Comics #15 GD; Star Spangled #43 FN/VF; many others including various Classics Comics, Archies, EC's and lots of Fox and Fiction House Good Girl Art comics.

Silver Age

For the first time in a long while, we have experienced a marked decrease in our total Silver Age sales. We have continued to acquire large collections of both Marvel and DC Silver Age, yet over the past month our Silver Age sales have dropped by about one third. Collectors seem to be hesitant to invest their money in key Silver Age comics in any grade, with two notable exceptions: Amazing Spider-Man #1 and Amazing Fantasy #15. We haven't had either of these books in a while but the requests for them keep coming in.

Most of the collections we have purchased lately, have been in the good to fine-very fine range with some high number Near Mints. Maybe that has something to do with the decrease in sales. However, I find it difficult to understand the collector who insists on NM only! I wonder how long this attitude would last trying to collect a run of More Fun Comics?

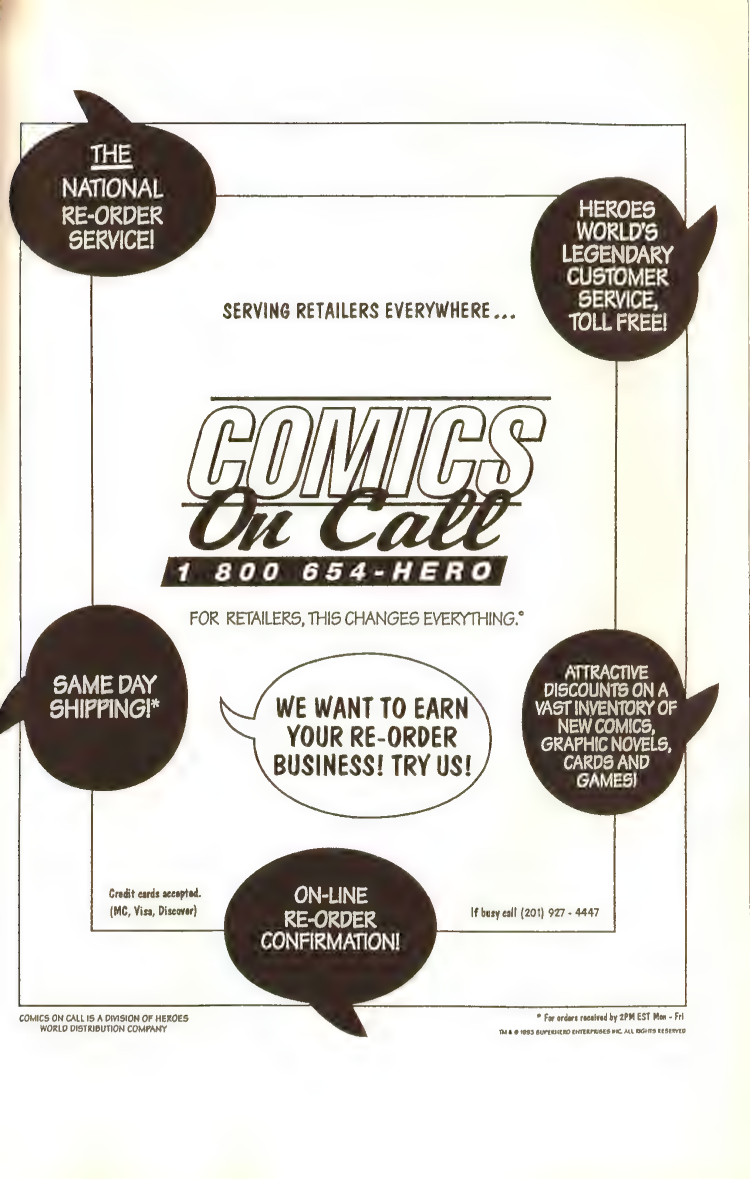
Some Recent Sales: Justice League America #22 VG $50; Journey into Mystery #100 NM $70, #112 FN/VF $60; Green Lantern #8 GD $20; Avengers #4 FN $250; Worlds Finest #68 FN- $80, The Outlaw Kid #17 VF $15

Recent Acquisitions: A complete set of Marvel Annuals from 1962 to 1974, a collection of Marvel Westerns from the Atlas days thru the seventies (all titles), Daredevil #'s 1-150, Fantastic Four #'s 4-150, a set of high grade 104 and 124 DC's (misc. titles), Showcase #'s 28 and 30, Batman #171, Lois Lane #70, Amazing Spider-Man #50, and many others.

New Comics

Marvel: Things are pretty much status-quo here, the X-titles dominate Marvel's sales week after week. The new spin-off titles seem to have really caught on here; Nova, Sabertooth, Night Thrasher, Scarlet Witch, Hawkeye, and Deadpool all were, or are, sell-outs each month. Some of Marvel's cross-over's did well also; particularly Blood and Thunder and Fall of the Hammer. The other major hit for Marvel over the past three months was Marvel's, the classy mini-series that brought us stirring painted images of our favorite Marvel heroes.

DC: Superman sales have begun to rebound since the current storyline involving Lobo and Superman's meta-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morphosis into who knows what? With Doomsday's return just around the corner sales should stay strong for some time to come. The superman spin-off titles have also done extremely well for us. The next big seller for DC is Green Lantern, however it seems like the folks at DC have forgotten to put out the latest issue.

Independents: Image and Bongo titles head up the independent market, with the latter leading the way. Back issue sales of Valiant titles are non-existent here, the same could be said for new comics sales from the Ultraverse line. Dark Horse seems to hold their own as does Fantagraphics. It seems the most anticipated independent comic is Beavis and Butthead.

In Conclusion

I would like to thank Steve Fishler, Scotty Moore, and Dave Anderson for filling some gaping holes in my Golden Age collection. Now the quest begins anew. Till next time, happy hunting.

CRAIG BARNETT
Comic Book Shop
East 1 Boone
Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 326-7018

Greetings from Spokane. Before I get into my market report I need to qualify the report in issue #10. The report was written by a former manager and does not in any way reflect my views, stores, or actual sales on any of the companies mentioned.

The year-end figures are in and 1993 was a very good year. Sales were up about 40% overall due to my third store

> "I think that the market is stronger than it was a year ago."

and a terrific Summer. Even with all the pitfalls of the investor market (like me with a few cases too many of some comics and no one to sell them to) and the card mini implosion, I think that the market is stronger than it was a year ago. The majority of collectors left in the market seem concerned with art and story and not with how much they will make off the current hot book.

Golden Age

Acquisitions: Since my last report, I found a nice collection of 70 high grade Golden Age books including All Flash #4, Black Terror, Mystic, Green Llama, and the Windy City copy of Power #1. Sales: About half of the books flew out of the store in a matter of days at prices averaging Overstreet plus 10 to 15%. Golden Age is very rare in this area and it was pretty hard to bring myself to sell them since this was the first collection of any note that I have picked up in the last five years.

Silver Age

Acquisitions: books are quite a bit more common here as I imagine everywhere else. I bought a collection of approximately 600 very high grade Silver books. There were only a couple of key books but the collection is of note because there were multiple copies of everything else most of which was in mint condition. There were FF annuals three each of 1, 2, and 3, Spiderman annuals 2 each 1, 2, 3, and the same with Marvel superheroes, Sgt. Rock and more.

New Comics

This is still the area that keeps the doors open. We are in the middle of the January thru February dead time now and people have cut their buying down to the core titles they "can't live without."

DC: Sales on the Superman titles have leveled off at a much higher level than I originally anticipated. The Death Of Superman story brought a lot of readers into the market and it looks like about 20% of them have stayed on the titles. The great news is that many of them are sampling other titles, increasing their importance to the overall comic market.

The new Superman books (Superboy, Supergirl, and Steel) have all sold better than anticipated with the minor media coverage on Superboy making that the standout of the bunch. The breaking of Batman did not bring in very many new long term readers from outside the existing comic market… It merely attracted the interest of those already in our market. The Vertigo titles have all had significant sales decreases in the past few months with the exception of Sandman which is still one of DC's strongest books.

Marvel: The "back to the basics" war cry (thru March anyway) seems to be a continuation of last years gimmick covers and style over substance. The only notable exceptions are Marvels which was an instant sell out and Daredevil Man Without Fear which in addition to being an instant sell out created a demand for the regular Daredevil title which I have not seen in years. They have a great stable of artists and some of the newcomers show a lot of promise but in my opinion the story content seems to be lacking focus and substance. The move to hire Quinn to oversee Doctor Strange has potential and should be watched.

Image: The current sales on Image Comics have leveled off to a consistent level and ordering on these titles can finally be done with some accuracy which should stop the glut of unsold product that was dumped on the market. I am really tired of all the slamming that is going on against Image. There is not one company which did more to bring new readers and collectors into the market last year than Image. It really doesn't matter if you like the creators or not, Image gave comics an incredible boost and everyone benefited. Even when you add up all the problems they had with misssolicitations, late product etc., the overall effect that they had on the market was immediately huge and with the marketing of the characters through cartoons and toys and possibly movies: long-term.

Valiant: Sales on Valiant books are solid but the downside is there are no new readers jumping on the bandwagon. Bloodshot #0 and the Valiant Vision 3-D pack were instant sellouts and did Garner some attention by ex-readers and non-readers. If these two items have any affect on Valiant sales, we should see the results in the next couple of months.

Dark Horse: Star Wars has been an incredible seller, bringing new customers into the stores. Vortex is doing better than I had thought it would, but I have not heard many rumblings for other Comics Greatest World titles. Aliens and Predator series continue to sell at high levels with strong demand for back issues.

Defiant: Sales have not been great on any of the Defiant books. Plasm and Dark Dominion are moderate to slow and good guys sold only a handful of copies. The $3.60 cover price on Good Guys #1 was a major factor in its poor sales.

The one great thing I have to say about Defiant is that when they were "trashed" (figure of speech) in my last market report they (J. Clark Smith, Sales/Marketing Manager) shot off a nice letter to me about their company explaining how they work and what they are doing in the comic market. If this is an indication of how much they are paying attention to what the market Reports say and what dealers and fans are saying, then the potential for this company is great!

Independents: Sales on small company independents is at an all time low. By small company I refer to the one title companies who show up every Summer and then disappear. There used to be some interest in the small press comics but it seems to have vanished. Customers seem to have this need to read whole stories and not just the 1st part of a story that will never be finished. If a new company comes out with a quality product and gives the impression that it is here for the long haul, people seem more willing to try them.

The best example is Legacy by majestic which is a nice looking book with some name recognition due to their ads. The first issue sold at the same quantity as mid level DC

> "There used to be some interest in the small press comics but it seems to have vanished."

books. Both my customers and I want solid stories and art and they want the company to be around in the future. If we don't get these things, books don't get ordered.

Thanks for reading and a special thanks to Michael Naiman for helping us sort out the "mystery" of last month's market report.

WILLIAM H. FEIST III
SHIRLEY A. FEIST
The Book Trader
Dakota Square Mall
Minot, ND 58701
(701) 838-1694

Hey, Hey! It's Book Trader Bill! Happy New Year! to everyone in the comics industry - fans, retailers, distributors and publishers.

Golden/Silver/Bronze Age

As usual, nothing to report in this area.

Current Age

Overall, the market continues to be quite soft in this area. Customers seem to be much more selective about their purchases than before. Even titles that once commanded near fanatical loyalty from their readers are now scrutinized carefully before purchase.

Sales over the Holiday Season were down considerably from 1992. Although some of this undoubtedly reflects the aforementioned softening market, much of it is a reflection of the powerful effect The Death of Superman story line had on the market last year. Superman #75 and Funeral For A Friend were released in November and December of 1992. It is definitely more than coincidental that in 1993 we had sales increases of 10% to 25% over 1992 every single month except November and December where we experienced sharp decreases.

I also must note that many of my fellow merchants at Dakota Square Mall reported weak holiday sales this year, suggesting that the overall economy also had a major role in weaker sales these past two months. I and many of my fellow merchants also noticed that although there was less quantity of merchandise sold this past holiday season, the items that did sell were higher priced than usual, suggesting a search for quality over quantity this past season.

January is already shaping up as a less than good sales month. Some of that is post-holiday bills ("Hey, Honey! Where's those credit cards. We need to cut 'em up again!").

However, much of the problem here is weather related. The average temperature in Minot has been zero or less this month with blizzard conditions, blowing snow, and closed rural roads throughout the state. The wind chill is expected to reach -55 degrees Fahrenheit this weekend! It's warmer in Nome, Alaska than it is here! (Anybody want to buy a shop in Minot, North Dakota?)

High Grade Silver Age
FOR SALE!

MARVEL

Amazing Spider-Man #3 VF- $750.00
Amazing Spider-Man #5 VF- $550.00
Amazing Spider-Man Annual #2 VF $90.00
Iron Man #1 VF/NM.....$350.00
Avengers #4 FN/VF.....$475.00
Daredevil #2 VF+.....$300.00
Fantastic Four #48 NM.....$700.00
Fantastic Four #49 NM.....$175.00
Fantastic Four #50 VF/NM.....$150.00
Tales To Astonish #48 NM- (small arrival date) $120.00
X-Men #1 FN-.....$900.00
X-Men #4 VF-.....$225.00

DC

Atom #1 VG+ $160.00
Challengers #2 VF-.....$400.00
Green Lantern #4 VF- (small arrival date).....$175.00
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DC Comics - The Superboy, Supergirl, and Steel titles were all received very well by Superman fans. Even the banner promotional poster was well received! I've had several customers waiting to buy it! You know a story line is hot when they want to buy the promotional posters! Interest in the Green Lantern: Emerald Twilight story is also quite strong (relatively speaking) despite the lateness of the title.

The Batman: Knightquest story, however is definitely losing ground here. We have lost approximately 18% of our storage for this story in the last month. Many customers are simply bored with the knightquest saga as it drags on and are ready for Bruce Wayne to return. I hope that DC is not foolish enough to drag this story out too long or they will have lost everything they gained earlier. That would truly be a shame for them, for the retailer and for the fans. Oddly enough, however, Catwoman is doing very well. My staff has heard people comment that this is the only title that continues to deal directly with Bane.

Children's Crusade did very well although it is a shame that DC is releasing Children's Crusade #2 so late. A side bar to this is that sales of Sandman back issues are picking up gradually, we completely sold out of signed (by Neil Gaiman) Sandman #50's over Christmas. People are beginning to realize by reading Children's Crusade and the beginning of the last Sandman story arc that they have been missing a terrific title all this time.

Also, the Elseworlds Annuals currently being solicited for March seem to be sparking some real interest amongst DC fans. If DC manages to produce a quality story with quality art for these titles, they will have advanced themselves greatly in the eyes of comic collectors.

Finally, there appears to be great interest in DC's Batman/Spawn, although many fans do not appear to be aware that Mr. McFarlane has little or nothing to do with this book. It will be interesting to see how well it is received in March as word gets out.

Dark Horse - Dhs company's titles continue to be good mid-range sellers. As reported last month their best title is, without a doubt, Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi. The others simply remain steady, except for their Comics Greatest World spin-offs which are slowly losing ground. Hopefully, X will change that. We'll see.

Image - Image continues to gradually slow their loss of customer confidence by putting out more material in a (more or less) timely manner. However, if anyone needs proof that Image's loss of customer confidence has not completely ended, let me point out that Spawn, their best-selling title, continues to lose support from the fans here over time. It has been several months since we have sold out of Spawn. Most of the older, more established titles continue to do well, but I have noticed that it is much harder to get people interested in new Image titles as they become available. The exception to this was Ifrail, (was it my imagination or was this a Wolverine caricature?).

Finally, tremendous interest has been elicited by the upcoming Spawn/Batman cross-over. I predict (for what it's worth) that this will be a very hot seller.

Malibu - Malibu's new Ultraverse continues to lose customer base. However, their Star Trek: Deep Space Nine title continues to do very well so far.

Marvel - X-Men #25 and Wolverine #75 continue to be steady back issue sellers. In addition, Gambit has been doing very well as did Daredevil: Man Without Fear.

The alleged major changes in Spider-Man that will begin with Amazing Spider-Man #387 and #388 are eliciting only minor interest amongst fans here. Ditto for Suicide Run and the 2099 cross-over Fall of the Hammer. And the conclusion to Daredevil: Fall From Grace was extremely disappointing. I have heard several comments about Marvel's leading everyone to believe Matt Murdock would die when in fact, he merely changed his name. Did Marvel "pull a fast one" on all of us or did I just miss something?

Marvel's biggest hit so far, however, has been Marvel's. I simply cannot get enough of this item. It is has sold out instantly every time I get it in. Marvels is not just a comic, it is art, in the same way that Batman: The Killing Joke was art rather than just a mere comic. Marvel Comics take note: People will pay relatively big bucks ($4.95 each) for quality art and story that has very little, if any, glitz.

And, unfortunately, there is absolutely no doubt that Beavis & Butthead #1 will be a major seller next week (it will have come out by the time you read this). Other titles to watch out for (in my humble opinion) include X-Men #50 and X-Factor #100.

Valiant - At this point Valiant is hardly worth mentioning here, although Armak and A.O. Matrowar continue to do well.

Cards

Skybox: I am now sold out of the Marvel Masterpiece II cards. I managed to clear out almost all of the Marvel Universe IV cards during my pre-inventory half price sale. I lost money, but at least they are gone! Ditto for the two $100 Marvel Masterpiece Jars and the $50 Marvel Series III tin.

Overall, competition in this market remains very fierce as nearly every one is carrying them.

Hey, hey! It's Book Trader Bill wishing that some of you folks in Los Angeles would send that warm weather up this way!

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SOTHEBY'S RECOVERS LOST MARVELS!

JACK KIRBY, DICK AYERS, AND JOHN ROMITA RE-CREATE CLASSIC MARVEL COVERS FOR SPRING JUNE 18TH SOTHEBY'S COMIC BOOK AND COMIC ART AUCTION.

Sotheby's is pleased to announce that the following cover Re-Creations will be offered in our June 18 Comic Art Auction.

JACK KIRBY

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 1
Finished pencils, catalogue estimate $5,000/$7,000
AMAZING FANTASY No. 15
Finished pencils, catalogue estimate $5,000/$7,000
TALES OF SUSPENSE No. 39
Finished pencils, catalogue estimate $4,000/$5,000

JACK KIRBY (pencils) & DICK AYERS (inks)

FANTASTIC FOUR No. 1
Signed by both artists, catalogue estimate $6,000/$8,000
FANTASTIC FOUR No. 5
Signed by both artists, catalogue estimate $5,000/$6,000
JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY No. 83
Signed by both artists, catalogue estimate $5,000/$6,000
X-MEN No. 1
Signed by both artists, catalogue estimate $5,000/$7,000
STRANGE TALES No. 89
Signed by both artists, catalogue estimate $3,000/$4,000

JOHN ROMITA (pencils and inks)

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 39
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $3,000/$5,000
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 50
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 53
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 54
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 64
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 100
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000
DARE-DEVIL No. 16
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000

DICK AYERS (pencils and inks)

TALES TO ASTONISH No. 27
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,000/$3,000
STRANGE TALES No. 101
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500
FANTASTIC FOUR No. 4
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500
FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL No. 1
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500
THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 3
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500
THE AVENGERS No. 1
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $3,000/$4,000
JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY No. 89
Finished inked cover, catalogue estimate $2,500/$3,500

For many years the community of original art collectors around the world have waited for a chance to purchase original artwork from the beginning of Marvel Comics Silver Age. Now, after thirty years, and the mounting evidence that many of the classic Marvel Covers will perhaps never surface "the chance of a lifetime" will unfold at the fourth Sotheby's Comic Auction. By an exclusive arrangement with Marvel Comics this one-time offering of select covers will go on the auction block.
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Sotheby's is still accepting consignments till March 10th.

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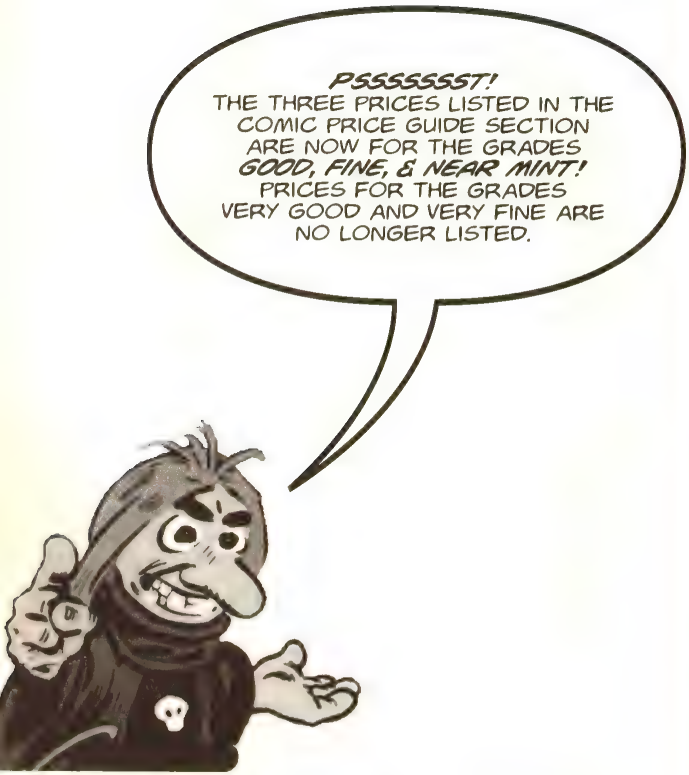
PSSSSSSST!
THE THREE PRICES LISTED IN THE COMIC PRICE GUIDE SECTION ARE NOW FOR THE GRADES GOOD, FINE, & NEAR MINT!
PRICES FOR THE GRADES VERY GOOD AND VERY FINE ARE NO LONGER LISTED.

INTRODUCTION TO COMIC PRICING

Welcome to another issue of *Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly*, the most accurate and dependable Price Guide magazine for comic books and non-sports cards in the nation!

About Pricing

The prices shown in the price guide section represent an honest and responsible evaluation of current market values. The prices represent an average of dealer retail prices compiled from data supplied by the network of Overstreet Advisors. Prices often vary widely from region to region because supply and demand factors often vary. Therefore, each buyer and seller should determine prices based on both prices listed here and regionally specific supply and demand factors. The prices, particularly on more expensive books, are a "moving average" of the market prices realized over the past month. Prices are constantly being recorded and averaged prior to the release of each issue. It is important for collectors to understand that since the Overstreet price is an average, it will never be the same as the highest or lowest most recent sale price. Collectors attempting to sell some or all of their acquisitions at a wholesale price to dealers should remember that dealers buy comics in order to resell them to other collectors. Dealers most always pay a higher percentage for issues which can be sold quickly and a much lower percentage for items in low demand. Dealers buy at a percentage that allows for their overhead, plus a fair margin of profit. Most will pay anywhere from 25-75% of the prices listed in this guide depending on inventory needs and local market conditions. However, material from the past 10 to 15 years is readily available and dealers may only offer a very small amount (20% or less) or may not be interested at all.

Pricing New Comics: This guide lists retail prices of most current comic books. The latest issues are usually listed at cover price, except in certain cases when market conditions warrant.

Pricing Lower Grades

Prices listed in this Guide are for comic books in Good (GD), Fine (FN) & Near Mint (NM) condition. The value of a comic in a lower grade is a specific percentage of the Near Mint value. To find the correct price spread for a specific book, consult the annual *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*. Please note, however, that price spreads vary, based on many factors, including demand, rarity in grade, and overall rarity.

Pricing Indicators

- ✣ An increase in price since last issue.
- ▫ A decrease in price since last issue.
- ▥ A high demand issue.

The 8 Nomenclature Grades & the Overstreet Numerical Equivalent

GRADE/ABBREVIATION	HIGH	CENTER	LOW	POINT SPREAD
Mint (MT)	100	99	98	(3)
Near Mint (NM)	97	94	90	(8)
Very Fine (VF)	89	82	75	(15)
Fine (FN)	74	65	55	(20)
Very Good (VG)	54	45	35	(20)
Good (GD)	34	25	15	(20)
Fair (FR)	14	10	5	(10)
Poor (PR)	4	3	1	(4)

Grading Comics

Grading comic books is essentially describing its condition, which may range from absolutely perfect "newsstand" condition (MINT) to extremely worn, dirty, and torn (POOR). For a more detailed instruction on the art of grading comic books, consult *The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide* available in most book stores, comic specialty shops, or direct from Overstreet Publications.

Polybagged Comics

It is the official policy of Overstreet Publications to grade comics regardless of whether they are still sealed in their polybag or not. The polybag and it's entire contents may be preserved so that all components of the original product remain together.

Restored Comics

Since this hobby began it has always been tempting for the dealer or collector to perform repairs on comic books. In the past, tape was used to seal tears, rips, loose covers, and centerfolds and spine reinforcement. It is now known that many tapes are very damaging to paper. Today, most repairs are done with neutral pH glues, special invisible papers, and webbing reinforcement.

For years now, comic books have had minor to major restoration work performed. It is very important for the novice collector to understand that most repaired/restored books are not worth the same as books in the same grade in their ***original*** condition The more expensive the book, the more likely it has been restored. After restoration, these books are not actually in higher grades, but are altered lower grade books that are described by their **Apparent Grade** Some books do need to be repaired and/or restored to improve to preserve them.

Note: The lower the grade, the less objectionable repairs/restoration become. In fact, low grade books sell better when they have been cleaned to achieve a better visual appeal. Whenever possible, books should be examined very closely for repairs and restoration before purchase. Some of the major things to look for are: bleached/whitened pages and covers, trimmed pages and covers, spine and tear reinforcement, glue, replaced staples, replaced sections of the cover, wrinkles pressed from covers, recolored (color touch) and reglossed covers.

Dealers should disclose any known restoration at the time of sale. Any restoration is considered a defect because it is an alteration of the original condition of the book.

Grading Definitions

The hardest part of evaluating a comic is being objective, and knowing what characteristics to look for. Very important: A book must be graded in its entirety, considering **all** defects. Do not grade the cover alone. A book in any of the grades listed must be in **Original Unrestored Condition**. Restored books must be described as such.

The grades and their numerical equivalents follow.

The Eight Nomenclature Grades And Their Numeric Range*

MINT (MT) (ONE 100-98)
Near perfect in every way. Only the most subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimal fading. Corners are cut square and sharp. Staples are generally centered and clean with no rust. Cover is generally centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and fresh. Spine is tight and flat.

NEAR MINT (NM) (ONE 97-90)
Nearly perfect. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimum of fading. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever so slight blunting permitted. Staples are generally centered, clean with no rust. Cover is well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and like new. Spine is tight and flat.

VERY FINE (VF) (ONE 89-75)
An excellent copy with outstanding eye appeal. Sharp, bright and clean with supple pages. Pages and covers can be yellowish/tannish (at the least) but not brown and will usually be off-white to white.

FINE (FN) (ONE 74-55)
An exceptional, above average copy that shows minor wear but still relatively flat, clean and glossy with no subscription crease or brown margins. Typical defects include: light spine wear, minor surface wear, a light crease, minor yellowing/tanning to interior pages. Compared to a VF, cover inks are beginning to show a significant reduction in reflectivity but is still highly collectible and desirable.

VERY GOOD (VG) (ONE 54-35)
The average used comic book most commonly found. This comic shows moderate wear but eye appeal has not been reduced to the point that it is not desirable. One or two minor markings on cover or minor spine roll are allowed. Lightly creased along spine or extremities, subscription crease, loose centerfold, or minor chip or piece missing allowed.

GOOD (GD) (ONE 34-15)
This comic has all pages and covers, although there may be small pieces missing. Commonly creased, scuffed, abraded and soiled, but books in this grade are completely readable. Paper quality is low but not brittle.

FAIR (FR) (ONE 14-5)
Very heavily read and soiled, but still complete. Damaged beyond collectibility for most collectors, brings 30-50 per cent of the Good price.

POOR (PR) (ONE 4-1)
Sufficiently degraded so as to have little or no collector value. Often severely stained, abraded, defaced, or damaged beyond readability.

** The Numeric Ranges from Poor to Mint are further explained in The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide.*

Adventures of Bob Hope #107
© DC

ACTION COMICS (Action Comics Weekly #601-642)
Dec. 1954-Present
National Periodical Publ./DC Comics
1-Reprint, 1988, 50¢-c 0.50
201-Last pre-code issue 25.00 75.00 175.00
202-220 21.00 64.00 150.00
221-240 8.00 24.00 55.00
241, 243-251: Last Tommy Tomorrow 13.00 39.00 90.00
242-Origin & 1st app. Brainiac 190.00 300.00 700.00 H
252-Origin & 1st app. Supergirl; ex-retro of Metallo, his 2nd appearance since Superboy #49 110.00 330.00 765.00 H
253-2nd app Supergirl 21.00 64.00 150.00 H
254-1st meeting Of Bizarro & Superman 19.00 58.00 135.00 H
255-1st Bizarro Lois Lane 13.00 39.00 90.00
256-261 8.60 26.00 60.00
262, 264-266, 268-270 6.40 19.00 45.00
263-Origin Bizarro World 11.00 27.00 65.00 H
267-3rd Legion app 40.00 120.00 275.00 H
271-275, 277-282, 284-Last 10¢ issue 5.70 17.00 40.00
276-6th Legion app. 17.00 51.00 120.00
283-Legion Of Super-Villains app 7.10 21.00 50.00
284-Mon-El app. 7.10 21.00 50.00
285-12th Legion app 7.10 21.00 50.00
286-289 3.70 11.00 26.00
290(7/62)-17th Leg on app. Phantom Girl app 3.70 11.00 26.00
291, 292, 294-298 2.60 8.00 18.00
293-Origin Comet 5.40 16.00 38.00
295-(5/63) 2.90 9.00 20.00
301-303, 305-306, 310-320 1.70 5.00 12.00
304-Origin & 1st app. of Black Flame 2.10 6.00 15.00
309-Legion app. 2.00 6.00 14.00
321-333, 335-340 1.50 3.80 9.00
334-Giant (G-29) 2.30 7.00 16.00
341-346, 348-358 1.10 2.70 6.50
347, 360 (Giants G-33 & G-45) 1.70 4.20 10.00
361-372, 374-380 1.00 2.00 5.00
373-Giant (G-57) 1.30 3.30 8.00
381-424 411-Eclipso origin-r 0.80 1.60 4.00
425-Adams art 1.00 2.50 6.00
426-436, 438, 439 0.60 1.20 3.00
437, 442-(100 page giants) 1.00 2.00 5.00
440-1st Grell-r on Green Arrow 1.00 2.50 6.00
441-Grell-r on Green Arrow 1.00 2.00 5.00
442, 444-499 0.50 1.00 2.50
500-Superman life story (1:00, 68pgs) 0.40 0.80 2.00
501-531, 554-562 0.30 0.60 1.50
552, 553-Animal Man-c/s 1.00 2.50 6.00
563-Alan Moore 1.20 2.90 7.00
564-Byrne begins 0.30 0.60 1.50
565-599: 598-1st app. Checkmate 0.20 0.40 1.00
600-(2.50, 84 pgs.) 0.80 1.60 4.00
601-642 (1.50: 52 pgs.): 611-614: Catwoman 0.30 0.60 1.50
643-Monthly begins. Perez c/a, scripts 0.30 0.60 1.50
644-649, 651-661, 663-666, 668-679, 644-Perez-a begins, 679-Last 1.00-c 0.20 0.40 1.00
650-(1.50, 52 pgs.)-Lobo cameo 0.30 0.60 1.50
662-Superman reveals id to Lois Lane 0.70 1.40 3.50
667-(1.75, 52 pgs.) 0.40 0.70 1.75
680-682 0.30 0.50 1.25
683-Doomsday cameo 1.30 3.10 7.50 H
683-2nd & 3rd printings 0.30 0.50 1.25
684-Doomsday battle issue 1.30 3.30 8.00 H
685, 686-Funeral For A Friend iss.; Supergirl app. 0.40 0.80 2.00 H
686-2nd & 3rd printings 0.30 0.50 1.25
687-(1.95)-Collector's Ed. wide-cut-c 0.40 0.80 2.00
687-(1.50)-Newsstand Ed. w/mini-poster 0.30 0.60 1.50
688-694,696 (1.50): 688-Guy Gardner-c/s 0.30 0.60 1.50
695-newsstand version 0.30 0.60 1.50
695-(2.50) variant cover foil embossed 0.50 1.00 2.50
Annual 1 ('87)-Arthur Adams-a; Batman app. 1.00 2.50 6.00
Annual 2 ('89, 1.75)-Perez-c/a 0.40 0.80 2.00
Annual 3 ('91, 2.00, 68 pgs.) 0.40 0.80 2.00
Annual 4, 5 ('92-'93, 2.50) 0.50 1.00 2.50

ADAM-12 (TV)
Dec. 1973-No. 10, Feb, 1976 (Photo covers)
Gold Key
1 2.60 8.00 18.00
2-10 1.20 3.30 8.00

ADDAMS FAMILY (TV cartoon)
Oct. 1974-No. 3, Apr, 1975 (Hanna-Barbera)
Gold Key
1 4.30 13.00 30.00 H
2, 3 2.60 8.00 18.00 H

ADVENTURE COMICS
No. 200, May,1954-No 503, Sept., 1983
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics
200 40.00 120.00 285.00 H
201-209 27.00 81.00 190.00 H
210-1st app. Krypto 215.00 600.00 1535.00 H
211-213, 215-220 22.00 65.00 152.00 H
214-2nd app. Krypto 30.00 90.00 210.00 H
221-246: 241-Batman x-over (6/58) 19.00 56.00 130.00
247-1st app. Legion Of Super Heroes (4/58) 325.00 975.00 2600.00 H
248-252, 254-255: Green Arrow in all 14.00 41.00 95.00
253-Superboy/Robin first meet 19.00 56.00 130.00
256-Origin Green Arrow 60.00 170.00 385.00 H
257-259 12.00 36.00 85.00
260-1st Silver Age orig.n of Aquaman (5/59) 60.00 170.00 395.00 H
261-266, 268, 270: 266-(11/59)-Aquagirl tryout (origin1st app.), not same as later character 8.60 26.00 60.00
267-2nd Legion Of SuperHeroes 80.00 250.00 575.00
269-Intro Aqualad 18.00 55.00 128.00
271-Origin Luthor retold 20.00 60.00 140.00
272-274, 276-280: 278-2nd Metallo 6.40 19.00 45.00
275-Origin Superman/Batman team retold 15.00 47.00 110.00 H
281, 284, 287-289: 288-Bizarro cover 6.40 19.00 45.00
282-5th Legion app. 14.00 43.00 100.00
283-Intro Phantom Zone 11.00 32.00 75.00
285-1st Bizarro World story in Adv. 10.00 30.00 70.00
286-1st Bizarro Mxyzptlk 10.00 30.00 70.00 H
290-8th Legion app.; last 10¢ issue 13.00 39.00 90.00
291, 292, 295-298: 295-Bizarro-c 4.30 13.00 30.00
293-13th Legion app. 8.60 26.00 60.00
294-1st Bizarro M. Monroe, Pres. Kennedy 8.60 26.00 60.00
299-1st Gold Kryptonite (8/62) 5.00 15.00 35.00
300-Legion series begins (9/62) 40.00 110.00 265.00
301-Origin Bouncing Boy 11.00 34.00 80.00
302-305 7.10 21.00 50.00
306-310 5.40 16.00 38.00
311-320 4.00 12.00 28.00
321-Intro Time Trapper 3.10 9.00 22.00
322-330: 327-Intro Lone Wolf in Legion 2.90 9.00 20.00
331-340 2.30 7.00 16.00
341-Triplicate Girl becomes Duo Damsel 1.70 5.00 12.00
342-345, 347, 350, 351 1.50 3.80 9.00
346, 348, 349 1.70 4.20 10.00
352, 354-360 1.30 3.30 8.00
353-Death of Ferro Lad in Legion 1.90 6.00 13.00
361-364, 366, 368-370 1.00 2.50 6.00
365, 367, 371, 372 1.20 2.90 7.00
373, 374, 376-380: 380-Last Legion in Adv. 1.00 2.50 6.00
375-Intro Quantum Queen 1.20 2.90 7.00
381-Supergirl begins (1st full length story, 6/69) 0.40 0.80 2.00
382-389, 391-400 0.40 0.80 2.00
390, 402-(80 pg. giants G-81 & G-91) 1.00 2.50 6.00
401, 402, 404-418: 52 pg. issues 0.40 0.80 2.00
403-Giant G-81; Legion-r 1.00 2.00 5.00
411, 413, 418, 419: 36 pg. issues 0.20 0.40 1.00
412-r/origin & 1st Animal Man/Str. Adv. 0.80 1.60 4.00
414-r/2nd Animal Man/Str. Adv. 0.60 1.20 3.00
415, 420-Animal Man reprints 0.30 0.60 1.50
416-Giant DC-12; G.A.-r 0.20 0.50 1.20
417-Vigilante; Frazetta Shining Knight-r 0.20 0.50 1.20
421-424 0.20 0.40 1.00
425-New look begins 0.30 0.60 1.50
426-427, 431-458: 435-Mike Grell's 1st-a 0.20 0.40 1.00
428-1st app. Black Orchid (6-7/73) 1.10 2.70 6.50 H
429-430-Black Orchid app 0.60 1.20 3.00 H
459, 460-New Gods/Darkseid story concludes from New Gods #19 (#459 is called 9-10/78) w/o missing a month 0.60 1.20 3.00
461, 462: Death of Earth II Batman 0.80 1.60 4.00
463-466
467-Starman by Dithe, Plastic Man begin 0.30 0.60 1.50
468-490: Last comic-size iss 0.20 0.40 1.00
491-499: 491-100 pg. digests begin 0.20 0.50 1.20
500-All Legion reprints 0.30 0.60 1.60
501-503: Golden Age reprints 0.20 0.50 1.20

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
No. 51, Jan,1954-No 174, Aug, 1967
American Comics Group
51(3-D effect-r/story)-Only white-c 18.00 54.00 125.00 H
52-58 (3-D effect-r/stories)-Black-c 16.00 47.00 110.00 H
59-9-D effect story only 10.00 30.00 70.00 H
60-Woodeseque-a by Landau 6.00 18.00 42.00 + H
61-Last pre-code issue (1-2/55) 5.00 15.00 35.00 H
62-70 3.60 11.00 25.00
71-90 2.60 8.00 18.00
91,96(#95 on inside),107,116-All contain Williamson-a 3.60 11.00 25.00
92-95,97-99,101-106,108-115,117-127 2.30 7.00 16.00
100 2.90 9.00 20.00
128-Williamson/Krenkel/Torres-r; last 10¢ 2.30 7.00 16.00
129-150 2.00 6.00 14.00
151-153: 153-Magic Agent app. 1.70 5.00 12.00
154-Nemesis begins (origin), ends #170 2.30 7.00 16.00
155-167, 169-174: 157-Magic Agent app 1.70 5.00 12.00
168-Orlando app 2.10 6.00 15.00 H

ADVENTURES OF BOB HOPE, THE
No. 32, Apr-May, 1955-No. 109, Feb-Mar, 1968
National Periodical Publications
32-40: 32-1st code approved issue 7.40 22.00 52.00 +
41-50 6.00 18.00 42.00 +
51-70 3.90 12.00 27.00 +
71-93, 95-105: 95-1st monster issue (11/65) 2.00 6.00 14.00
94-Aquaman cameo 2.30 7.00 16.00
106-109-Monster-c/s by N. Adams-c/s 3.70 11.00 26.00

ADVENTURES OF JERRY LEWIS, THE (Advs. of Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis No. 1-40) (See Super DC Giant)
No. 41, Nov, 1957-No. 124, May-June, 1971
National Periodical Publications
41-60 3.70 11.00 26.00 +
61-80: 68, 74-Photo-c 2.90 9.00 20.00
81-91,93-96,98-100: 89-Bob Hope app 1.70 5.00 12.00
92-Superman cameo 2.30 7.00 16.00
97-Batman/Robin x-over; Joker-c/story 3.60 11.00 25.00
101-104-Neal Adams-c/a 2.90 9.00 20.00
102-Beatles app. 3.40 10.00 24.00
105-Superman x-over 2.00 6.00 14.00
106-111,113-116 1.00 2.50 6.00
112-Flash x-over 2.00 6.00 14.00
117-Wonder Woman x-over 1.30 3.30 8.00
118-124 1.00 2.00 5.00

ADVENTURES OF MIGHTY MOUSE (Formerly Mighty Mouse)
No. 166, Mar, 1979-No. 172, Jan, 1980
Gold Key
166-172 1.00 2.00 5.00

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (Formerly Superman)
Jan, 1987-Present
DC Comics
424 0.40 0.80 2.00
425-428: 449-Invasion 0.40 0.70 1.75
450-452: 452-Superman/Flash race 0.30 0.60 1.50
494-Lobo-c/app. pre-dates Lobo #1 0.80 1.60 4.00

465-479, 481-491: 491-Last $1.00-c	0.20	0.40	1.00	
480-(1.75, 52 pgs.)	0.40	0.70	1.75	
492-495	0.30	0.50	1.25	
496-Doomsday cameo	1.00	2.00	5.00	
496: 497-2nd printings	0.30	0.50	1.25	
497-Doomsday battle ss.	1.00	2.50	6.00	
498, 499-Funeral for a Friend; Supergirl app.	0.60	1.20	3.00	
498-2nd & 3rd printings	0.30	0.50	1.25	
500-(2.95, 68 pgs.)-Collector's Ed. w/card	0.60	1.20	3.00	
500-(2.50, 68 pgs.)-Reg. Ed. w/different c	0.50	1.00	2.50	
500-Platinum Edition	14.00	41.00	95.00	
501-(1.95)-Collector's Ed. w/die-cut c	0.40	0.80	2.00	
501-(1.50)-Regular Ed. w/mini-poster, diff. c	0.30	0.60	1.50	
502-507, 509: 502-Supergirl-c/story	0.30	0.60	1.50	
508-(2.50)-Hollo-graphs foil-c ed	0.50	1.00	2.50	
508-Challengers of the Unknown app. '	0.30	0.60	1.50	
Annual 1 ('97)	0.30	0.60	1.40	
Annual 2 ('98)-Lobo app.	0.40	0.80	2.00	
Annual 3 ('01, 2.00)-Armageddon 2001	0.40	0.80	2.00	
Annual 4 ('02, 2.50)-Guy Gardner/Lobo c/story	0.50	1.00	2.50	
Annual 5 ('03, 2.50)-Bloodlines Earthplague	0.50	1.00	2.50	

ADVENTURES OF THE FLY (The Fly #1-6; Fly Man #32-39)
Aug, 1959-No. 30, Oct, 1964; No. 31 May 1965
Archie Publications; Radio Comics

1-Shield app., origin The Fly; S&K c/a	50.00	140.00	335.00	H
2-Williamson, S&K	26.00	79.00	185.00	H
3-Origin retold	19.00	58.00	135.00	H
4-S&K-c; Powell-a; Shield x-over	11.00	34.00	80.00	
5-10: 7-1st S.A. app. Black Hood. 8-1st S.A. app. Shield (also in #9)		7.40	22.00	52.00
11-13, 15-20: 20-Origin Flygirl retold		4.60	14.00	32.00
14-Intro & origin Flygirl		6.40	19.00	45.00
21-30: 30-1st S.A. app. Comet		3.10	9.00	22.00
31-Black Hood, Shield, Comet app.		3.60	11.00	25.00

ADVENTURES OF THE JAGUAR, THE
Sept, 1961-No. 15, Nov, 1963
Archie Publications (Radio Comics)

1-Origin & 1st app. The Jaguar	16.00	47.00	110.00
2, 3: 3-Last 10¢ issue	7.90	24.00	55.00
4-6: Catgirl app.	5.70	17.00	40.00
7-10	4.00	12.00	28.00
11-15: 13, 14-Catgirl, Black Hood app.	3.10	9.00	22.00

AGE OF THE REPTILES
Nov, 1993-No. 4, 1994 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-3	0.50	1.00	2.50

AGENT THREE-ZERO
Sept, 1998-Present (3.95, color, 52 pgs.)
Galaxonovels,Inc
1-Polybagged w/card & mini-poster 0.80 1.60 4.00

AKIRA
Sept, 1988-No. 37, 1993 (3.50, color, deluxe)
Epic Comics

1	2.10	6.00	15.00
1, 2-2nd printings	0.70	1.40	3.50
2	1.50	3.80	9.00
3-5	1.30	3.10	7.50
6-15	0.90	2.30	5.50
16-33: 17-Began 3.95-c	0.70	1.40	3.50
34, 35-(4.95-c)	1.00	2.00	5.00

ALBEDO
Apr, 1983-No. 14, Spring, 1989 (B&W)
Thoughts And Images

0-Yellow cover, 50 copies	6.40	19.00	45.00
0-White cover, 450 copies	5.00	15.00	35.00
0-Blue, 1st printing, 500 copies	1.70	5.00	12.00
0-Blue, 2nd printing, 1000 copies	1.30	3.30	8.00
0-3rd print	0.40	0.80	2.00
0-4th print	0.20	0.50	1.20
1-Dark red; 1st app. Usagi Yojimbo	1.50	3.80	9.00
1-Bright red	1.50	3.80	9.00
2	1.00	2.50	6.00
3-14	0.40	0.80	2.00

ALIEN LEGION: BINARY DEEP
1993 (3.50, color, one-shot, 52 pgs.)
Epic Comics (Marvel)
nn-With boxed-in trading card 0.70 1.40 3.50

ALIENS, THE (Captain Johner and...)(Also see Magnus Robot Fighter)
Sept-Dec, 1987, No. 2, May, 1992
Gold Key

1-Reprints from Magnus #1,3,4 6-10, all by Russ Manning	2.10	6.00	15.00
2-Reprints from Magnus #1 by Manning	0.80	1.60	4.00

ALIENS (Also see Dark Horse Presents #24)
May 1988-No. 6, July, 1989 (1.95, B&W, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-1st appearance Aliens in comics	4.70	14.00	33.00
1-Second printing	1.50	3.80	9.00
1-Third - Sixth printings	0.40	0.80	2.00
2	3.40	10.00	24.00
2-Second printing	0.80	1.60	4.00
2-Third printing	0.40	0.80	2.00
3	1.70	5.00	12.00
4	1.30	3.30	8.00
5, 6	1.00	2.50	6.00
3-6: 2nd printings	0.40	0.80	2.00
ALIENS MINI COMIC 1 (2/89. 4x6")-Included in Aliens Portfolio	1.70	4.20	10.00
Aliens Platinum Edition (See Dark Horse Presents...)			

ALIENS
V2 #1 Aug, 1989-No 4, 1990 (2.25, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

V2 #1	1.70	5.00	12.00
V2 #1-2nd printing ('90, 2.25)	0.50	0.90	2.25
2-4	1.00	2.50	6.00

ALIENS: COLONIAL MARINES
Jan,1993-No. 12, 1993 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-7	0.50	1.00	2.50

ALIENS: EARTH WAR
June, 1990-No. 4, Oct, 1990 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-Sam Kieth-a(p) in all	1.70	4.20	10.00
1-2nd print	0.50	1.00	2.50
2	1.30	3.30	8.00
3, 4	1.10	2.70	6.50

ALIENS: GENOCIDE
Nov, 1991-No. 4, Feb, 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4: Suydam painted-c 0.50 1.00 2.50

ALIENS: HIVE
Feb, 1992-No. 4, May, 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4: Kelley Jones-c/a in all 0.50 1.00 2.50

ALIENS: LABYRINTH
Sept, 1993-No. 4 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-3: 1-Painted-c 0.50 1.00 2.50

ALIENS/PREDATOR: THE DEADLIEST OF THE SPECIES
July 1993-No. 12, 1994 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-3: Bolton painted-c; Guice-p	0.50	1.00	2.50
1-Embossed foil platinum ed. no price/no ads	4.30	13.00	30.00

ALIENS: ROGUE
Apr, 1993-No. 4, July, 1993 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4 0.50 1.00 2.50

ALIENS: SACRIFICE
May, 1993 (4.95, color, one-shot, 52 pgs.)
Dark Horse Comics
nn-Peter Milligan scnrpts; painted-c/a 1.00 2.00 5.00

ALIENS: SALVATION
Nov, 1993 (4.95, color, one-shot)
Dark Horse Comics
nn-D. Gibbons script 1.00 2.00 5.00

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR (See Dark Horse Presents #36)
June, 1990-No. 4, Dec, 1990 (2.50, mini-series, color)
Dark Horse Comics

1	1.70	5.00	12.00
1-2nd printing	0.50	1.00	2.50
0 (July, 1990, 1.95) r/DHP 34-36	2.10	6.00	15.00
2, 3	1.50	3.80	9.00
4-Dorman : painted-c	1.00	2.00	5.00

ALIEN 3
June, 1992-No. 3, Aug, 1992 (2.50, color, mini series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-3	0.50	1.00	2.50

ALIEN WORLDS
Dec, 1982-No. 9, Jan, 1985
Pacific Comics/Eclipse

1	0.30	0.60	1.50
2-9: 2, 4-Dave Stevens-c/a	0.20	0.40	1.00
3-D No. 1-Art Adams 1st pub. art	0.60	1.20	3.00

ALL AMERICAN MEN OF WAR
No. 127, Aug-Sept, 1952-No. 117, Sept-Oct, 1966
National Periodical Publications

127 (1952)	60.00	190.00	445.00	H
128 (1952)	40.00	130.00	305.00	H
2 (12-1/52-53) - 5	36.00	107.00	250.00	H
6-10	21.00	64.00	150.00	H
11-18: Last pre-code issue	20.00	59.00	138.00	H
19-28	14.00	41.00	95.00	H
29, 30, 32-Wood-a	15.00	45.00	105.00	H
31, 33-40	11.00	32.00	75.00	H
41-50	8.60	26.00	60.00	H
51-66	6.40	19.00	45.00	H
67-1st app. Gunner & Sarge; series begins	11.00	34.00	80.00	H
68-70	6.30	19.00	44.00	H
71-80	4.00	12.00	28.00	H
81, 83-88: 87-1st app.H.Tank 88-Last 10¢ issue	2.90	9.00	20.00	H
82-Johnny Cloud begins	5.10	15.00	36.00	+ H
89-100: 91-1st Haunted Tank cover	2.60	8.00	18.00	H
101-117: Johnny Cloud app. 111,115 & 117	1.80	5.00	12.50	H

ALL-STAR SQUADRON
Sept, 1981-No. 67, Mar, 1987
DC Comics

1-46, 48-67	0.20	0.40	1.00
47-McFarlane-a (1st full story)	0.60	1.20	3.00
Annual 1-3 (11/82-9/84)	0.20	0.40	1.00

ALL-STAR WESTERN (Weird Western Tales #12 on)
Aug-Sept, 1970-No. 11, Apr-May, 1972
National Periodical Publications

1	1.70	4.20	10.00	H
2-El Diablo by Morrow begins	0.70	1.40	3.50	H
3-8: 3-Origin El Diablo	0.70	1.40	3.50	H
9-Fazzella a (r). 3 pgs.	1.00	2.00	5.00	H
10-1st app. Jonah Hex (2-3/72)	8.60	26.00	60.00	H

All American Men of War #50
© DC

Amazing Spider-Man #27
© MEG

11-Prelude to Torrnenter	3.60	11.00	25.00	H

ALPHA FLIGHT (See X-Men #120, 121)
Aug. 1983-Present; #52 on are direct sale)
Marvel Comics Group
1-i52 pgs.-Byrne-e begins: Wolverine cameo 0.50 1.00 2.50
2-12: 12 Double-size 0.40 0.70 1.75
13-Wolverine app. 0.90 2.30 7.50
14-16, 16-Wolverine cameo 0.30 0.50 1.25
17-X-Men x-over; Wolverine cameo 0.90 1.80 4.50
18-28: Last Byrne issues 0.30 0.50 1.25
29-32: 25-49 0.70 0.40 1.00
33: 34-Wolverine app. 34-Origin retold 0.90 2.30 5.50
50-Double size 0.30 0.50 1.25
51-Jim Lee's 1st work at Marvel 1.30 3.10 7.50
52, 53: Wolverine, 53-Lee/Portacio-a 0.80 1.60 4.00
54, 63, 64-No Jim Lee art 0.20 0.40 1.00
55-62: Jim Lee art(p) 0.60 1.20 3.00
65-74: 76-80, 74-Wolverine, Spider-Man 0.30 0.50 1.25
75-1.95 52 pgs.) 0.40 0.70 1.75
87-90: Wolverine app.; Jim Lee-c 1.00 2.00 5.00
91-99: 101-105, 107-119, 121-126 0.30 0.60 1.50
100-(2.00, 52 pgs.) Avengers app. 0.40 0.70 1.75
106-Northstar revelation issue 0.80 1.60 4.00
106-2nd printing 0.40 0.70 1.75
120-x2.25) Portacio/Liefeld wpaper 0.40 0.80 2.00
129-(1.75) 0.40 0.70 1.75
130-(2.25) 0.50 0.90 2.25
Annual 1 (9/86, 1.25) 0.30 0.60 1.50
Annual 2-(12/87, 1.25) 0.30 0.50 1.25
Special '92#1 (6/92, 2.50)-Wolverine-c/s 0.50 1.00 2.50

AMAZING ADULT FANTASY (Amazing Advs. No. 1-6; Amazing Fantasy No. 15)
No. 7 Dec. 1961-No. 14 July, 1962
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)
7-Dikko-a; n-all 40.00 110.00 255.00 H
8-Last Ditko issue 29.00 88.00 205.00 H
9-13 26.00 79.00 185.00 H
14-Prof. X prototype 29.00 86.00 200.00 H

AMAZING ADVENTURES (Amazing Adult Fantasy #7 on)
June, 1961-No. 6, Nov. 1961
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)
1-Origin Dr. Droom (1st Marvel Super-Hero); Ditko & Kirby art in all 80.00 230.00 535.00 H
2 40.00 120.00 275.00
3-6: 6-Last Dr. Droom 32.00 96.00 225.00

AMAZING ADVENTURES
Aug. 1970-No. 39, Nov. 1976
Marvel Comics Group
1-Inhumans (by Kirby; in F-4 ends #101) & Black Widow (ends #9); double feature begins 2.10 6.00 15.00
2-4 1.00 2.00 5.00
5-8: N. Adams-a 1.20 2.90 7.00
9, 10: 9, 10-Magneto app. 1.00 2.00 5.00
11-New Beast begins (1st app.); ends #17 1.70 4.20 10.00 H
12-17: 13-Brotherhood of Evil Mutants app. 1.20 2.90 7.00 H
18-1st app. Killraven, N. Adams-a 1.70 5.00 12.00 H
19-39 0.70 1.40 3.50 H

AMAZING ADVENTURES
Dec. 1979-No. 14, Jan. 1981

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Marvel Comics Group
V2#1-Reprints X-Men 1, 38 0.80 1.60 4.00
2-14: Early X-Men reprints 0.60 1.20 3.00

AMAZING CHAN & THE CHAN CLAN, THE (TV)
May, 1973-No. 4, Feb, 1974 (Hanna-Barbera)
1 1.70 4.20 10.00
2-4 1.00 2.50 6.00

AMAZING FANTASY (Formerly Amazing Adult Fantasy)
No. 15, Aug., 1962 (Sept., 1962 in indicia)
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)
15-Origin & 1st app. Spider-Man; 1st app. Aunt May & Uncle Ben 1190.00 3570.00 15200.00 + H

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE (See Giant-Size Spider-Man)
March, 1963-Present
Marvel Comics Group
1-Origin retold; Ditko-c/a #1-38 900.00 2700.00 10500.00 + H
1 (Golden Records Reprint) 11.00 32.00 75.00 H
(with Golden Records (1966) 21.00 64.00 150.00 H
2-1st app. The Vulture 200.00 610.00 2025.00 + H
3-1st app. Doc Octopus 130.00 380.00 1150.00 + H
4-Origin & 1st app. The Sandman 110.00 330.00 975.00 + H
5-Dr. Doom app. 100.00 310.00 825.00 + H
6-1st app. Lizard 90.00 270.00 725.00 + H
7, 8, 10: 8-Early FF backup story 70.00 200.00 475.00 + H
9-Origin & 1st app. Electro 80.00 230.00 525.00 + H
11, 12 40.00 120.00 270.00 + H
13-1st app. Mysterio 50.00 150.00 365.00 + H
14-1st app. the Green Goblin (Norman Osborn); Hulk x-over 125.00 375.00 975.00 + H
15-1st app. Kraven The Hunter; 1st mention of Mary Jane Watson (not shown) 50.00 140.00 320.00 + H
16-1st Daredevil x-over (yellow costume) 32.00 96.00 225.00 + H
17-2nd app. Green Goblin (c/s) 60.00 170.00 395.00 + H
18-1st app. Ned Leeds (later Hobgoblin) 34.00 101.00 235.00 + H
19-Sandman app 28.00 84.00 195.00 + H
20-1st app. & origin The Scorpion 34.00 101.00 235.00 + H
21-2nd app. The Beetle (see Str. Tales#123) 22.00 66.00 155.00 + H
22-1st app. Princess Python 20.00 60.00 140.00 + H
23-3rd app. Green Goblin (cistery) 34.00 103.00 240.00 + H
24 19.00 56.00 130.00 + H
25-1st app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo) (face not shown, but introduced as Mary Jane) 23.00 69.00 160.00 + H
26-4th app. Green Goblin, 1st Crime Master 26.00 77.00 180.00 + H
27-5th app. Green Goblin 24.00 71.00 165.00 + H
28-Origin/1st app. Molten Man 31.00 92.00 215.00 + H
29, 30 16.00 49.00 115.00
31-38: 31-Intro Harry Osborn (later becomes 2nd Gr. Goblin); Gwen Stacy & Prof. Warren. 38-Last Ditko issue, 2nd app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo face not shown) 7/66) 14.00 41.00 95.00 + H
39-Green Goblin-c/s, id revealed 17.00 51.00 120.00 + H
40-Origin Green Goblin (1st time told) 27.00 81.00 190.00 + H
41-1st app. Rhino 11.00 34.00 80.00 + H
42-3rd app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo; last 2 panels) (1st time we see face is shown) (11/66) 11.00 34.00 80.00 + H
43-49 7.40 22.00 52.00 + H
50-Intro Kingpin (7/67) 34.00 103.00 240.00 + H
51-2nd app. of Kingpin 13.00 39.00 90.00
52-59, 56-Intro Capt. George Stacy 5.70 17.00 40.00
61-74: 74-Last 12¢ issue 4.60 15.00 34.00
75-88, 91-93, 95, 99: 84, 85-Kingpin-c/s 4.00 12.00 28.00
90-Death of Capt. Stacy 4.90 15.00 34.00
94-Origin retold 6.40 19.00 45.00
96-98: Drug books not approved by CCA, Green Goblin storyline
97, 98-Green Goblin-c 8.60 26.00 60.00
100-Anniversary issue (9/71) 19.00 56.00 130.00 + H
101-Intro/1st app. Morbius; last 15¢ issue 21.00 62.00 145.00 + H
101-2nd printing (9/92, silver ink) 0.40 0.80 2.00
102-Origin Morbius (52 pgs., 25¢-c) 14.00 43.00 100.00
103-118 2.60 8.00 18.00
119, 120-Spider-Man vs. Hulk 4.30 13.00 30.00
121-Green Goblin kills Gwen Stacy 9.00 33.00 75.00
122-Death of Green Goblin 14.00 43.00 100.00
123-129 2.60 8.00 18.00
129-1st app. The Punisher (2/74) 40.00 120.00 275.00
130-133, 138-190, 131-Last 20¢ issue 1.70 5.00 12.00
134-Punisher cameo app. (7/74) 3.10 9.00 22.00
135-2nd full Punisher app. (9/74) 9.00 28.00 65.00

136-Re-intro Green Goblin (Harry Osborn) 4.30 13.00 30.00
137-Green Goblin c/s (Harry Osborn) 2.10 6.00 15.00
161-Punisher (cameo) 1.70 5.00 12.00
162-Punisher, Nightcrawler app. 3.10 9.00 22.00
163-173, 181-190: 181-Origin retold 1.20 2.90 7.00
174, 175-Punisher app. 2.60 8.00 18.00
176-180: Green Goblin app 1.70 5.00 12.00
191-193, 195-199, 203-208, 210-219 1.00 2.50 6.00
194-1st Black Cat 1.70 5.00 12.00
200-Giant-origin issue 2.90 9.00 20.00
201, 202-Punisher app. 3.10 9.00 22.00
209-Origin & 1st app. Calypso 1.30 3.30 8.00
220-237: 225-Foolkiller-c/story (2/82) 1.00 2.50 6.00
238-1st app. Hobgoblin (Ned Leeds) (3/83) (w/Tattoo: card intact)
10.00 29.00 68.00 + H
238-Without Tattooz 3.60 11.00 25.00
239-1st Hobgoblin/Spidey battle (2nd app.) 5.00 15.00 35.00
240-243, 246-248 1.00 2.50 6.00
244-Hobgoblin cameo 1.50 3.80 9.00
245-Lefty Donovan w/Hobgoblin powers battles Spider-Man (10/83)
2.00 6.00 14.00
249-251-Hobgoblin/Spidey battle storyline 1.70 5.00 12.00
252-1st app. black costume for Spidey (5/84) 3.70 11.00 26.00 +
253-1st app. The Rose 1.20 2.90 7.00
254-Jack O'Lantern app. 1.00 2.50 5.00
255, 262, 264, 266-273, 277-280, 282, 283: 279-Jack O'Lantern-c/s; 282-X-Factor x-over 0.70 1.40 3.50
256-1st app. Puma 0.80 1.60 4.00
257-2nd app. Puma; Hobgoblin cameo 1.50 3.80 9.00
258-Hobgoblin app. (mmor) 1.70 5.00 12.00
259-Full Hobgoblin app., origin Mr. J. Watson 2.10 6.00 15.00
260-Hobgoblin story 1.50 3.80 9.00
261-Hobgoblin c/s 1.70 4.20 10.00
262-Spider-Man unmasked 1.00 2.50 6.00
265-1st app. Silver Sable 1.90 6.00 13.00
265-Silver ink 2nd printing 0.60 1.20 3.00
274-Zarathos (Spirit Of Vengeance) app. (3/86)0.80 1.60 4.00
275-(52 pgs.)-Iron Man/Jim Rhodes; Hobgoblin c/s 1.70 5.00 12.00
276-Hobgoblin story 1.50 3.80 9.00
281-Hobgoblin battles Jack O'Lantern 1.70 4.20 10.00
284-Punisher cameo app., Gang War begins, ends #288; Hobgoblin c/s
1.50 3.80 9.00
285-Punisher app.; mmor/ Hobgoblin app. 2.60 8.00 18.00
286-Hobgoblin c/app. (mmor) 1.00 2.50 6.00
287-Hobgoblin app. (mmor) 1.00 2.50 6.00
288-Hobgoblin full app. 1.30 3.30 8.00
289-(1.25, 52 pgs.)-Death of Ned Leeds (1st Hobgoblin), Macendale (Jack O Lantern) becomes new Hobgoblin 3.10 9.00 22.00 H
290-292 0.90 1.80 4.50
293, 294-Parts 2 & 5 of Kraven story 1.30 3.30 8.00
295-297 0.90 2.30 5.50
298-Todd McFarlane-c/a begins, 1st app. (cameo) Eddie Brock who becomes Venom (not in costume) 5.30 16.00 37.00 + H
299-1st app. (cameo) Venom in costume 3.10 9.00 22.00 + H
300-(52 pgs.)-Last black costume; 1st full Venom story
8.60 26.00 60.00 + H
301-305 2.10 6.00 15.00
306-311, 313, 314 1.70 4.20 10.00
312-Hobgoblin battles Green Goblin 3.00 9.00 21.00 +
315-317: Venom app. 2.70 8.00 19.00 + H
318-323, 325: 319-Biweekly begins 1.30 3.10 7.50 +
324-Sabretooth app.; McFarlane-c (no art) 1.70 5.00 12.00
326, 327, 329-No McFarlane 0.70 1.40 3.50
328-Hulk app., last McFarlane-a 1.70 4.20 10.00
330, 331: Punisher app 0.80 1.60 4.00
332, 333-Venom-c/s 1.30 3.10 7.50 H
334-336, 338-343 0.50 1.00 2.50
337-Hobgoblin app. 0.70 1.40 3.50
344-1st app. Cletus Kasady (Carnage) 1.40 3.50 8.50 H
345-1st full app. Cletus Kasady 1.70 5.00 12.00 + H
346, 347-Venom app. 1.60 4.00 9.50 H
348, 349, 351-359 0.40 0.80 2.00
350-(1.50, 52 pgs.) 0.60 1.20 3.00
360-Carnage cameo 1.20 2.90 7.00 H
361-Intro Carnage 2.40 7.00 17.00 + H
361-2nd printing (1.25-c) 0.40 0.80 2.00
362, 363-Carnage & Venom-c/s 1.50 3.80 9.00 + H
362-2nd printing 0.30 0.60 1.50
364, 366-374, 376-387: 373-Venom back-up 374-Venom-c/s 376-Cardiac app. 378-Maximum Carnage, part 3. 381, 382-Hulk app. 383-The Jury app. 384-Venom/Carnage app. 0.30 0.50 1.25
365-(3.95)-Hologram-c, pull-out poster; 1st app. Spider-Man 2099
1.00 2.50 6.00 H
375-(3.95)-Holo-grafx-c; Vs. Venom-c/s 0.90 2.30 5.50 H
Annual 1-('64)-1st Sinister Six; new 41 pg. story
4.00 125.00 320.00 + H
Annual 2-('65)-New Doctor Strange story (early)
16.00 48.00 125.00 + H
Special 3-(11/66)-Avengers vs Hulk x-over 5.70 17.00 40.00 H
Special 4-(11/67)-Spidey battles Human Torch (new 41 pg. story)
6.40 19.00 45.00 H
Special 5-(11/68)-Peter Parker's parents; New 40 pg. Red Skull story
7.10 21.00 50.00 H
Special 6-(11/69)-c/41 pg. Sinister Six story from Annual #1
3.20 7.90 19.00 + H
Special 7-(12/70)-All reprints 3.20 7.90 19.00 + H
Special 8-(12/71)-All reprints 3.20 7.90 19.00 + H
King Size 9-(1973)-r/Spec. Spider-Man magazine (Green Goblin c/s, 40 pgs re-edited from orig. 58 pgs) 3.20 7.90 19.00 + H
Annual 10-12 (1976-78)-All new-a 1.20 2.90 7.00
Annual 13 (79)-John Byrne-a 1.30 3.30 8.00
Annual 14 ('80)-Miller-c/a 1.50 3.80 9.00
Annual 15 ('81)-Punisher app., Miller-c/a 3.10 9.00 22.00
Annual 16-20 (1982-86) 1.00 2.50 6.00
Annual 21 ('87)-Wedding issue; direct sale 1.30 3.30 8.00
Annual 21 ('87)-Wedding issue; newsstand 1.30 3.30 8.00
Annual 22 ('88)-Evolutionary War 1.30 3.30 8.00
Annual 23 ('89)-Atlantis Attacks; Liefeld-p 1.00 2.50 6.00
Annual 24 ('90, 2.00) 0.70 1.40 3.50
Annual 25 ('91, 2.00)-1st solo Venom story 1.30 3.30 8.00 H
Annual 26 ('92, 2.25)-New Warriors-c/story; Venom solo story, cont'd in Spect. S-W Ann #12 1.00 2.00 5.00 H
Annual 27-('93, 2.95)-Polybagged w/card 0.60 1.20 3.00
Slating on Thm Ice 1-('90, 1.25, Canadian) 0.80 1.60 4.00
Slating on Thm Ice 1-(2/93, 1.50, American) 0.30 0.60 1.50
Double Trouble 2-('90, 1.25, Canadian) 0.60 1.20 3.00
Double Trouble 2-(2/93, 1.50, American) 0.30 0.60 1.50
Hit and Run 3-('90, 1.25, Canadian)-Ghost Rider-c/s
0.60 1.20 3.00
Hit and Run 3-(2/93, 1.50, American) 0.30 0.60 1.50
Chaos in Calgary 4-(2/93, 1.50, American) 0.30 0.60 1.50
Giveaways: See Overstreet Price Guide listings

AMERICAN, THE
July, 1987-No. 9, 1989 (1.75, B&W)
Dark Horse Comics
1-(1.50) 1.00 2.00 5.00
2 0.70 1.40 3.50
3-5 0.50 1.00 2.50
6-9 0.40 0.70 1.75
American Collection (B&W, 5.95) 1.00 2.50 6.00
Special 1 ('90, 2.25) 0.50 0.90 2.25

AMERICAN FREAK : A TALE OF THE UN-MEN
Feb, 1994-No. 5 (1.95, color; limited series)
DC Comics
1 0.40 0.80 2.00

AMERICA'S BEST TV COMICS
1967 (Giant Size, 68 pgs., 25 cent one shot)
American Broadcasting Company
1-Fantastic Four, Casper, Amazing Spider-Man 5.70 17.00 40.00

ANGEL AND THE APE (Becomes Meet Angel)(See Showcase #77)
Nov-Dec, 1968-No. 6 Sept-Oct, 1969
National Periodical Publications
1 2.90 9.00 20.00
2-6 1.70 5.00 12.00

ANIMAL MAN (See Strange Adventures #180 for 1st app.)
Sept, 1988-Present (Color)
DC Comics
1-Bolland-c on all 2.10 6.00 15.00
2 1.70 4.20 10.00
3, 4 1.00 2.50 6.00
5-10: 6-Invasion tie-in 0.80 1.60 4.00
11-20 0.60 1.20 3.00
21-26: 26-Last Grant Morrison scripts 0.50 1.00 2.50
27-49, 51-55, 57-59 0.40 0.70 1.80
50-(2.95, 52 pgs.)-Last issue by Tom Veitch 0.60 1.20 3.00
56-(3.50, 68 pgs.) 0.70 1.40 3.50
60-68: 60-Begin 1.95-c 0.40 0.80 2.00
Annual 1 (3.95,'93)- Children's Crusade Pt. 3 0.80 1.60 4.00

ANTHRO (See Showcase #74)
July-Aug, 1968 - No. 6, July-Aug, 1969
National Periodical Publications
1 4.30 13.00 30.00
2-6 2.30 7.00 16.00

ANYTHING GOES
Oct, 1986-No. 6 1987 (Mini-series)
Fantagraphics Books
1-Flaming Carrot app. 0.60 1.20 3.00
2-4, 6 0.40 0.80 2.00
5-TMNT app., 2nd time in color 0.60 1.20 3.00

APPLESEED
Sept, 1988-Book IV #4, Aug, 1991 (B&W)
Eclipse International
1 1.70 5.00 12.00
2-4 0.60 1.20 3.00
Book II, 1-5 (7/89) 0.60 1.10 2.75
Book III Vol. 1-4 0.60 1.10 2.75
Book III Vol. 5 (3.50-c) 0.70 1.40 3.50
Book IV #1-4 (1/91- 8/91, 3.50-c) 0.70 1.40 3.50

AQUAMAN (See Adventure #260, Detective #293 & Showcase #30-33)
Jan-Feb, 1962-No. 63, Aug-Sept, 1978
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics
1-Intro Quisp 30.00 90.00 290.00 +
2 17.00 51.00 120.00
3-5 12.00 36.00 85.00
6-10: 9-Sea Devils app. 8.60 26.00 60.00
11-20 6.40 19.00 45.00
21-32, 34-40 4.00 12.00 28.00
33-Intro Aqua-Girl (see Adv. 266) 5.70 17.00 40.00
41-47, 49 1.70 5.00 12.00
48-Origin reprinted 2.30 7.00 16.00
50-52: Deadman by N. Adams 3.10 9.00 22.00
53-56: 56-(5-6/71) 1.20 2.90 7.00
57-63: 57-(8-9/77). 58-Origin retold 0.90 1.80 4.50

AQUAMAN
Feb, 1986-No. 4 May, 1986 (Mini-series)
DC Comics
1 0.80 1.60 4.00
2-4 0.50 1.00 2.50
Special 1 ('88, 1.50) 0.40 0.80 2.00

AQUAMAN
Dec, 1991-No. 13, Dec, 1992 (1.00/1.25, color)
DC Comics
1-5 (1.00) 0.20 0.40 1.00
6-13: (1.25) 0.30 0.50 1.25

AQUAMAN: TIME & TIDE
Dec, 1993-No. 4, Mar, 1994 (1.50, color, mini-series)
DC Comics
1, 2-Peter David scripts 1-Origin begins 0.30 0.60 1.50

ARCANA
1993 (3.95, color)

America's Best TV Comics #1 © ABC

TRADING CARD PRICE GUIDE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Overstreet Trading Card Price Guide, a regular feature of Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly. CBM will keep you current on all of the hottest comic and media related cards in the "Marketplace"... as well as those newly introduced! You can depend on the Overstreet Card Guide to provide accurate values for current non-sports cards. That's because the prices shown here are averages of genuine dealer retail prices, not estimates! The pricing information is compiled from data supplied by our **Board Of Advisors** (listed at the beginning of the trading card section) You will note that this compilation lists prices for card sets, singles, specialty cards, and even unopened boxes when warranted. We have not itemized every card single, per the opinions of our advisors. We concur with their view... namely that most cards are assigned an average price for all cards in that set. Where single card prices do differ (e.g. specialty cards), card prices are listed separately. Prices often vary on certain individual cards within a set. As most collectors know, this is due to the popularity of a specific character, regionally specific market pressures, and/or the pressures of simple supply and demand. Collectors should take this into consideration when pricing cards.

All suggestions and criticism are welcome and your input is important to us! If you'd like to lend a hand in making the Overstreet Card Price Guide the most reliable card price guide ever published, send your comments to: Overstreet Publications, P.O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 or FAX us at (615) 479-8156.

The whole idea of collecting cards is, first and foremost, to have FUN! Card collecting is, after all, a hobby. The problems start when new collectors forget this most basic principle

When an attempt is made to turn the hobby into a "Get-rich-quick" scheme, financial "disaster" is always close behind. People who get into card collecting exclusively for monetary reasons almost always loose in the long run.

Trading cards have been around for a long time, longer even than comic books or comic strips. In fact, cards were issued as far back as the Civil War era. For the most part, this Price Guide deals with non-sports cards from the mid 1960s to the present. This is what most collectors are primarily interested in. Overstreet Publications projects that if interest in new cards continues to increase at present rates, demand for older pre 1960s cards will escalate as well. With each issue of Overstreet's CBM, new information and prices will be added. If you have trading card data and information, please send it to us. Card Data, Overstreet Publications, P. O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 (or FAX us at (615) 479-8156. All new data and corrections to existing data is much appreciated!

How Do I Start Collecting?

(1) First, collect cards that you enjoy! (2) Set a budget for yourself and keep within that budget. The wonderful thing about collecting trading cards is there are so many varieties to choose from. There have been so many different card sets published over the past thirty years that it is relatively easy to find some that you like and fits into your budget.

Where Can I Get Cards?

There are several different places to acquire trading cards: (1) Comic book and Sports card retailers. In most cases, they carry many of the recently released sports and non-sports cards. (2) Local swap meets and flea markets. (3) Many cities hold monthly sports card and non-sports card shows and conventions. (4) Mail order dealers. Because the overhead costs associated with selling at a card show or swap meet are lower than at a regular retail store, a collector may find some material at lower prices. Another factor to consider is the element of competition. Dealers who set up at swap meets and card conventions often experience greater competition than shops, and therefore sometimes offer lower prices in order to more successfully compete. The advantage of shopping at a retail store is that they usually have a better assortment of non-sports cards sets and chase cards. Many retail stores will also hold cards or put them on a layaway plan for regular customers. These services are less likely to be offered by swap meet or card show dealers. Also, shops have greater accessibility via regular hours. Usually collectors take advantage of both.

How Do I Buy, Sell, & Trade?

Buying - Bursng cards is not an exact science. Prices can vary from dealer to dealer. The best thing to do is to shop around until you find a dealer that you are comfortable with and can trust. Never be afraid to bargain on the price of a card or set of cards. The worst thing that can happen is that the dealer will say no. In many cases, a dealer may make a counter offer which is lower than their original asking price. This principle applies to both retail stores as well as convention dealers. It is important to remember though, that the retail stores have more bills to pay (higher overhead), so don't be disappointed if you are not always successful with your offer. If you don't feel comfortable with a price, just say "thanks" and try another location

Trading - Trading non-sports cards with other collectors can be as fun as trading sports cards. When trading, it seems to work well to trade "retail for retail". In other words, if you have a set of cards worth twenty dollars in the Overstreet Price Guide, trade for cards worth the same amount. Other factors can come into play that can change or otherwise affect this rule, but, for the most part, it's a good way to develop your trading skills. Trading cards with a dealer can be a little more complicated. I usually, dealers will trade for about fifty to sixty percent of the value of the card or set of cards. For example, if a card set is retailing for ten dollars, the dealer may offer a trade value of five or six dollars for that set. Think about your deal ahead of time and remember your right to say no if you don't like the deal, just the way dealers have a right to say no when they don't like a trade that's being offered. And don't forget the option of making a counter offer. Often the price that is finally agreed to is somewhere inbetween your ideal price and the dealer's ideal price!

Selling - The best way to sell cards is by attending card conventions as a dealer. If selling at a card convention is not your cup of tea then you can sell cards to a dealer. Selling cards to dealers will get you from twenty to fifty percent of the card or card set's value. That twenty dollar card set is worth ten to a dealer TOPS. It's always best to try and trade instead of out right sell a card. You will get more value out of the cards that way.

Protection & Storage

Like comic books, it is important to store cards in a protective environment. Cards can be damaged by the same things that can damage comic books. With this in mind, remember to store your cards in a cool dry place. Cards can fade and turn yellow or brown if exposed to sunlight and certain types of fluorescent lights. Store cards out of the light. To keep cards from bending or getting rounded corners, place them into plastic, non-acid, "nine-card-sheets". 100, 200, 500, and 1000 count cardboard boxes or plastic cases are also a good way to store large quantities of cards and are less expensive than plastic sheets. These are available at any sports card shop.

The "Chase" Is On!

Over the past thirty years, the subject matter for non-sports and entertainment cards has been primarily based upon the television and movie industry. These cards featured actual scenes from the TV show or movie. The buyer had only one thing to collect, so card collecting wasn't very difficult. In the 1970s, a bonus was added to each pack of cards: a sticker. This marketing strategy was designed to motivate the buyer to purchase more packs. Now there are two sets that need completing, cards *and* stickers. This wasn't difficult because every pack of cards had at least one sticker. Eventually the buyer obtained enough cards to complete the set. This continued until Impel and Upper Deck revolutionized the non-sports industry by including a special card found only in a few packs. This was a hologram and became known as the "chase" card. "Chase" cards were different, special, *and* harder to get. Their inclusion into selected packs of cards motivated buyers to a purchasing frenzy. Because less of these cards were available, the prices escalated. No longer did the average buyer purchase a pack to put a set together. Instead they purchased packs to try and find the chase card. In fact, making sets of cards became merely a byproduct of the process of "chase" card acquisition... trying to get all the chase cards became the primary collecting goal!

Grading And Pricing

Grading and pricing cards is much like grading and pricing comic books. Some elements of value are: (1) Condition - The higher the better. (2) Subject Matter - The more popular the more in demand and the more in demand the higher the value (3) Quantity Printed - Limited print runs mean less cards to go around. (4) Age - Older cards are generally harder to find and therefore more valuable. The condition of a card is among the most important factor in determining the price, but it is in no way absolute. For example, a card in a lower grade that is popular and hard to find can, and many times will, command a higher price than what is listed in a price guide, whereas, a mint set of an unpopular card could be worth less than the price listed. It is up to you, as the collector, to determine the price you are willing to pay for a given card or set. Remember that grading is not an exact science and the grading scale below should be used as a starting point. Older cards prior to 1970 can be adjusted upwards 5%-10% if they are in excellent condition or higher.

Grades & Their Values

Mint (MT) - A card with no defects whatsoever. All corners are sharp, the color is vibrant with the original gloss. No printing defects such as off centering of color should be visible. Card should be sharp and in focus 100%

Near Mint (NM) - A card with any one of the following minor flaws: a corner with slight wear, slightly off centered. No color loss or yellowing should be visible. Can have a very minor focus imperfection. 75%-95%.

Excellent (EX) - A card with any two of the following minor flaws: slight wear on a corner, slight off centering, the original gloss is diminished, very slight focus imperfection. 50%-75%

Very Good (VG) - A card in this condition may have gloss loss, some yellowing of the borders may be visible, rounding at the corners, pictures can be slightly off focus. 20%-50%

Good (GD) - A card in this condition can have scuffing at the corners and on the face, borders can be uneven and yellowing of the borders is apparent, glossiness is no longer noticeable. 10%-20%

Fair (FR), Poor (PR) - Cards in this condition are usually used for fillers until a better condition card can be found. These cards can have brown and dirty boarders, scuffing, well rounded off corners, water stains, writing and some may even have pieces missing. 2%-10%.

Editor's Note: CBM would like to give a special thanks to ***George Borax*** *for writing the initial introduction to this section. George is a nationally recognized collector of non-sports trading cards and was the first Overstreet Trading Card Advisor.*

ADDITIONS & CORRECTIONS

for the Overstreet Non-Sports Trading Card Price Guide are much appreciated! Send your data to:

Overstreet Publications
PO Box 2610
Cleveland, TN 37320-2610.

TRADING CARD MARKET REPORTS

GEORGE BOROW
Anything But Sports
13754 Mango Dr. #28
Del Mar, CA 92014
(619) 755-4826

Hello, and welcome back to the world of Entertainment cards. The Fleer X-Men are being released as I type this report. These look to be the hottest cards out since last years Marvel Masterpieces I X-Men series II and Doomsday. Boxes of the Fleer X-Men are already selling at $65 and up. Only time will tell if this lasts. Older cards seem to be in high demand lately. Sales of Star Trek cards from the eighties are picking up along with many other titles from the same time frame. Maybe people are beginning to realize that cards from this time frame are, for the most part, still affordable.

The Conan cards from Comic Images are still going strong with the exception of the Prism chase cards. The Holochrome cards are in demand but only if the price is around ten to fifteen dollars. Topps' Ren n Stimpy cards are becoming hard to find. Since there are three variations of each card in the fifty card set, it is difficult to complete. The sticker set is almost as difficult to complete since it is also fifty cards. Anyone wanting these sets be prepared to get frustrated. Skybox released their newest Star Trek card set featuring Deep Space Nine. Although the card stock is first class, I wasn't as impressed with them as say, the Star Trek Masterpieces. The four spectra etched cards are just OK, but I did like the limited SPG spectra card of the Wormhole That SPG card is the best of the Spectra card set in my opinion.

What's Hot - As I mentioned in the beginning, the '94 Fleer Ultra X-Men cards will probably be the hottest cards for awhile. Conan Chrome cards are still going strong as are the Ren N Stimpy Prism cards. Skybox's DS9 cards are hot, but I don't think that will last for very long. Marvel Masterpieces Series II are still selling well. They tapered off before Christmas but have begun to sell again after the holidays.

What's Not - Anything Valiant. Upperdecks' Valiant cards just sit as well as the Deathmate cards. The only thing I seem able to move are the D1 and D2 "Skull Cards" in the Deathmate series of cards. Superman Returns are also very slow which is a surprise to me. Because of the limited number of cases produced I would think that this set would be very collectable in the long run.
Well that's all for now. Thanks and so long from Sunny San Diego.

FRANK LYNN BREVARD
1550 Shoup Ct #2
Decatur, GA 30033
(404) 712-9295

As we start into the traditional slow season for comics, the non-sport arena is just starting to heat up for this new year. Sales of sets is still strong as well as full boxes of cards. Pack buying has slowed little but hopefully that will change. Specialty cards are still a big part of the non-sport market and there seems to be no real end in sight for their popularity. It seems that the non-sport manufacturing companies are bringing out the big guns to grab all those non-sport dollars out there and the fans are ready for it all.

Star Trek cards have been popular for over 20 years and Star Trek: The Next Generation cards have only added to the Star Trek card collecting frenzy. The Deep Space Nine factory set was just a little something to wet our appetite until the release of a regular Deep Space Nine set. The wait is over. Skybox has released a series of cards worthy of the name Star Trek. The 100 card set is UV coated on both sides and is full of color. The cards feature main and secondary crew and characters as well as information on the station and some of the interesting aliens that visit the station. There are also scenes from the first season featured on these cards.

Included in regular set, not as a subset like in the Next Generation cards, are five foreign language cards which feature German, French, Spanish, Japanese, and Klingon. There are five chase cards in this set which include a special gold card of the Wormhole that is a little harder to find. There is also a redemption card good for a 10 card foil stamped subset. The set itself is selling for between $15 and $20. The inserts are going for approx. $12 each with the Wormhole card going for $15+ and the redemption card is selling for around $15.

Marilyn Monroe - Another set that has been doing very well (thanks to the mass appeal of the subject matter) is the Marilyn Monroe cards manufactured by the Sports Time Card Company, Inc. The cards are simply marvelous. The 100 cards set is printed on heavier stock that most non-sport cards with UV coating on both sides. The fronts of the cards feature various photos of Marilyn and also feature a gold signature on the front of every card with historical and other information on the flip side.

There are nine chromium inserts which feature magazine covers of Marilyn. For those collectors adventurous enough to order a full case of Marilyn Monroe cards, each case comes with a special card which has a read diamond mounted on it. The collation of these cards are very iffy at best. I got only three sets from three boxes with all the other partial sets missing the same cards. The sets have been selling for between $20 and $25 with the chromium cards going for $12 each. The special diamond card goes for around $35.

X-force are the new X-Men cards from Fleer. I haven't had time to put together sets yet because packs have been flying out of the boxes. Packs have been selling for approx. $2 each. These cards are going to be the cards to have and is the set that other card companies will have to compete with for your non-sport dollars for months to come. More about these cards next month.

Fantasy cards have still been doing real well especially Richard Corben, Rowenna, and Roger Dean. The average set goes for $15. Fantasy card collectors are still eagerly awaiting the release of Olivia 3, Leather and Lace, and the fantasy work of Tim Hildebrandt. Well, that is all for this month. Just keep you eyes open because the season is just beginning and there is a whole lot more to come. Take care.

TRADING CARD PRICE GUIDE

A-TEAM
Topps 1983
66 Card Set (w/12 stickers) 7.50
Singles .10 ea.

ADDAMS FAMILY
Topps 1993
Box 10.00
Card Set (w/22 stickers) 7.00
Singles .10 ea
Stickers .25 ea.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1991
TSR 1991

SUPERMAN
Gum, Inc 1941
72 Card Set 4000.00
Card 1 50.00
Singles 2-48 25.00 ea.
Singles 49-71 90.00 ea.
Card 72 125.00

SUPERMAN
Topps 1966
66 Card Set 200.00
Singles 2.50 ea.

SUPERMAN
WTW 1984
72 Card Set (R/ of '41 set) 20.00

SUPERMAN
Leader Novelty 1940
48 Card Set 1800.00
Singles 1-24 30.00 ea.
Singles 25-48 40.00 ea.

SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE
Drakes Cakes 1979
24 Card Set 75.00
Singles 3.00 ea.

SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE
Weston Foods 1979
9 Card Set 30.00
Singles 3.00 ea.

SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE
Topps 1978
Series I: 77 Cards (w/12 stickers) 25.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .50 ea.
Series II: 88 cards (w/14 stickers) 22.00
Singles .15 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

SUPERMAN II
Topps 1981
88 Card Set (w/22 stickers) 15.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

SUPERMAN III
Topps 1983
99 Card Set (w/22 stickers) 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .15 ea.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: MOVIE
Topps 1990
Box 10.00
132 Card Set (w/11 stickers) 8.00

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: MOVIE II
Topps 1991
Box 10.00
99 Card Set (w/11 stickers) 5.00

TEK WORLD
Cardz 1994
100 Card Set 12.00
Singles .15 ea.
Tekchrome Cards T1-4 8.00 ea.
Autographed Card (Sullivan) 40.00
Autographed Card (Shatner) 45.00

TERMINATOR II
Topps 1991
44 Sticker Set 7.00
Singles .15 ea.

TERMINATOR II: JUDGEMENT DAY
Impel 1991
Box 12.00
140 Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
Holograms 17.50 ea.
Collector's Box w/spec. card & hologram 35.00

TICK, THE
NEC 1992
36 Card Set 8.00
Singles 0.20 ea.
Test Sheet #1-10,000 made 5.00
Test Sheet #2-5,000 made 5.00

TRIBE I
Press Pass 1993
Box 32.00
90 Card Set 12.00 +
Thermofoil Foil Cards T1-T5 9.50 ea. +
Prism Cards P1-P5 8.00 ea. +

TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER
Valiant 1993
Single Card (cover to Turok #1) 50.00

ULTRAVERSE
SkyBox 1993
Box 32.00
100 Card Set 11.00
Foil Etched Cards U1-U2 15.00 ea.
Unenhanced Rookie Cards R1-R9 4.00 ea.
Gold Foil Ultimate Rookie Cards S1-S4 7.00 ea.

UNCANNY X-MEN COVERS
Comic Images 1990
90 Card Set 14.00

UNCANNY X-MEN COVERS II
Comic Images 1991
45 Card Set 10.00

UNITY
Comic Images 1992
Box 35.00
90 Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
6 Chromium Cards 10.00 ea.

VALIANT ERA, THE
Upper Deck 1993
Box 40.00
120 Card Set 20.00
Singles .20 ea.
FA (First Appearance) Card 1-9 9.00 ea.
U1-U9 (Unseen Cards) 5.00 ea.
Hologram Card 5.00
SP1 X-O Manowar by Quesada 25.00 ea.

WEB OF SPIDERMAN
Comic Images 1991
75 Card Set 20.00
Singles 0.30 ea.

WILDC.A.T.S.
Topps 1993
Box 35.00
100 Card Set (2 #66's, no #68 in error) 15.00
6 Prism Cards 10.00 ea.

WILLIAM STOUT
Comic Images 1993
90 Card Set 11.00
6 Chromium Cards 6.50
Signed, uncut bonus card sheet 130.00

WIZARD OF OZ
Pacific 1990
Box 20.00
110 Card Set 15.00
Singles .10 ea.

WOLVERINE
Comic Images 1988
50 Card Set 15.00
Singles 0.40 ea.

WOLVERINE: FROM THEN 'TIL NOW
Comic Images 1991
45 Card Set 15.00

WOLVERINE: FROM THEN 'TIL NOW II
Comic Images 1992
Box 20.00
90 Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
6 Prism Cards, P1-P6 6.00 ea.
Uncut prism card sheet 40.00

THE WOMEN OF WHISPER
Kitchen Sink Press 1993
36 Card Set 11.00
Uncut Sheet 20.00

X-CUTIONER'S SONG
SkyBox 1992
12 Card Set (Comic Inserts) 10.00
Singles 0.50 ea.

X-FORCE
Comic Images 1991
Box 40.00
90 Card Set 14.00
Autograph Card (Rob Liefeld) 90.00

X-FORCE
Impel 1991
5 Card Set (Comic Inserts) 10.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

X-MEN
Comic Images 1991
Box 40.00
90 Card Set 14.00
Singles .10 ea.
Autograph Card (Jim Lee) 80.00

X-MEN
Pizza Hut 1993
2 Card Set 4.00
Singles 2.00 ea.

X-MEN SERIES I
Impel (SkyBox) 1992
Box 65.00
100 Card Set by Jim Lee 30.00
Singles 0.40 ea.
5 Holograms, XH-1 - XH-5 6.00 ea.

X-MEN SERIES II
SkyBox 1993
Box 50.00
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Fabulous Connections

I find your magazine to be an invaluable asset as a serious collector of comic books. I want to express sincere appreciation especially to your list of Overstreet Advisors. I have contacted several of these gentlemen and they have given me excellent advice. I have also made quite a few fabulous connections for purchasing hard to find issues at very reasonable prices. In my opinion Overstreet is the fairest price guide available.

Jeff McGowan, New Jersey

GD & FN Please

How about listing prices for the grades Good, Fine, and Near Mint instead of VG, VF, and NM. I feel it would be a lot easier since that's the way you guys have done it in the annual Price Guide for over twenty years. I know a lot of people wanted it that way, but I think it would be better for consumers by removing a potential element of confusion. Thanks fro considering my request.

Jeff Blaisdale, Ohio

We've been studying the idea since we went to three prices. Our conclusion is that you are right. Beginning with issue #10, we are listing the Good, Fine, and Near Mint price. We've also made this announcement several places throughout the magazine to alert readers of the change. Thanks to you and the many other CBM readers who provided feedback on this issue. We appreciate it!

Credit Where Credit Is Due

OCBM's article on "Batman-The Animated Movie" (#9, 1/94) quotes Bruce Timm on the genesis of the "Phantasm" character: "Alan Burnett pretty much came up with the phantasm [sic] character…I sat down and did twenty versions of him…Then a bunch of people said 'Hey, it looks like the Reaper from the comics!'…But the story-line is completely different. It may have a similar look, but it's not the same character."

The Reaper, a Batman villain created by penciler Alan Davis and myself, first appeared in "Batman: Year Two" (Detective Comics #575-578, 1987, collected in trade paperback in 1990). In "Year Two," Bruce Wayne in the early days of his career as Batman, falls in love with Rachel Caspian, whose father is revealed to be the Reaper. In "Mask of the Phantasm," Bruce Wayne, while debating whether or not to become Batman, falls in love with Andrea Beaumont, whose father is suspected of being Phantasm. The plot of "Mask of the Phantasm" took different turns, but the origin of the characters' relationships, and attendant conflicts - as well as the origin of the movie Phantasm, in all but name - is apparent. When I first approached the story editors of "Batman-The Animated Series," I took copies of "Batman: Year Two" as samples of my work. A story editor told me, "We're all familiar with these stories" (emphasis mine).

DC Comics has agreed to cut in not only the creators of the pre-existing "Phantasm" character appearing in The New Titans, Marv Wolfman and Tom Grummett, for a piece of the animated movie's profits, but also Alan Davis and myself, as creators of The Reaper. DC Comics also made a separate payment to me (I quote their letter) "for the use of certain of the plot elements of you 'Batman: Year Two' stories in the upcoming 'Batman-Mask of the Phantasm' motion picture and its various ancillary adaptations."

None of this is intended to take anything away from the creative staff of "Mask of the Phantasm," who took the source material in an entirely different direction, but neither should due credit for that material be denied Wolfman, Grummett, Davis or myself.

Mike W. Barr, California

Lopresti Swipe Gripe

This letter is in regard to your listing of Sludge #1 in the December issue of Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly. In the listing you wrote that pg. 6 of Sludge #1 was a swipe from Swamp Thing #1 (pg. 21). A swipe, as it has come to be defined by our industry, is a direct copy or tracing of a pre-existing piece of work. My illustration in Sludge is neither.

Obviously, the content of the page is the same, but I had no control over that. I am not the writer. When I read the script which called for Sludge to smash the gang's car, red flags went up immediately. I knew if I had to draw this scene I would have to make it as different from what Wrightson had done as possible. And that's what I did. The posturing of Sludge is different, the angle of the shot is completely opposite, and the way the car buckles under the impact of the blow is different. They are two different illustrations portraying the same action. It may be a content swipe (although, I'm sure that was not Gerber's intent) but it is certainly not an art swipe.

I'm quite sure your intent was not to defame my character, but that's exactly what it does. Whenever a "swipe" is listed, the reader automatically assumes you're referring to the artist. That puts their integrity in question….

Aaron A. Lopresti, Oregon

Your point is well taken and we have removed the errant notation in question. Although for me the word "swipe" does not have a terribly negative connotation, I can see where you might be concerned. Thanks for setting the record straight!

Two Cents

I was there too. After reading the opinions of retailers who were in business at or before the direct sales market started, I felt it was time to throw my two cents in.

In the beginning we were at the mercy of our local distributor, and then Phil Seuling and Seagate Distributors came on the scene. We bought our comics at 40% off, and they were non-returnable. We paid each months orders in advance and we usually had three months worth of orders outstanding. The books were sent to our location via UPS and yes, there were mistakes. It would take weeks sometimes to correct those mistakes (so much for point of purchase merchandising). It would take about one full day to do one months ordering. Heck, there was only Marvel, DC, and Warren magazines to worry about.

Time passed. We retailers had concerns about the direct market, concerns about our shops, concerns about what direction we were heading. At that time I felt retailer, distributor, and publisher desired to travel together in whatever direction was chosen. Well, we expressed our concerns to the publishers, usually at comic-conventions and mostly at Marvel. We were usually told that the direct sales market and specialty shops were in their infancy. That as we grew, so would the publisher's interest in addressing our concerns.

Time passed… Back home in San Diego we got a direct market distributor. Thanks to Pacific Comics. We received a discount on our product anywhere from 40% to 52% off. We now picked up our goods at a warehouse, no

longer depending on UPS. Oh yes there were still mistakes, but correcting them took days instead of weeks. We didn't have to pay in advance. It was now COD. It now took 3 to 5 days to do a monthly order. There were more titles to concern ourselves with. We started spending more time reading about the comics we were to receive than actually reading the comics themselves! We became more vocal about our concerns to the publishers. One concern I recall bringing up every year was the topic of some sort of return policy. Why not have the publishers share some of the risk with us retailers since the product was non-returnable? That concern was always nixed (and still continues to be). The publishers said they would address our other concerns when the direct market comprised at least 50% of total comic sales. Whenthat happened they would not only seriously listen, but act (so we were told).

Time passed… The direct sales market is huge and still growing. Marvel has gone public and their sales alone are well over $100 million. Yet today many retailers talk of just surviving, not of reaping the rewards that 20+ years of hard work and dedication should bring.

As I understand it, direct sales now account for well over 50% of the total comic sales. Yet the last response I received from a major publisher in regards to retailer concerns was a blunt, "Well, if you don't like it, maybe you should find another line of work." Given the huge size of the direct market now, that was a cruel, albeit honest, reply. We're talking about multi-million dollar operation. Why should they feel obliged to address our concerns? What if a few disillusioned or unhappy retailers drop out? So What? There will be others to quickly take their places.

In the last twenty years the "one shop owner" has made the least gains in this industry. Yet without these many comic shops to support the industry throughout the years, the publishers and distributors might not be making their millions of dollars today. We now see publishers making huge monetary gains. We see major direct sales distributors doing likewise. We see artists and writers making more and more money (and rightfully so). When will the "mom and pop" comic shops recieve a share of these huge profits? How many of these original shop owners are even still in business? It's been a roller coaster ride at best.

I have been a collector and dealer of comic books for 35 years. During those three and a half decades, I have seen the retailer continue to shoulder the majority of the risk and responsibility in this industry. I feel it is time that we retailers acknowledge our responsibility… and make some important decisions, especially concerning our monthly orders.

Some levels of this industry may not be thrilled with some of these decisions. Maybe they'll remember that the retailer is the backbone of the direct sales market. I can't stop thinking about what the Grateful Dead rock band once said, "What a long, strange trip it's been." And time passes…

Greg Pharis, San Diego

Madman Rave

Recently, being an open minded person, I tried a comic that I had heard so many rave reviews about that I just had to go and find a copy to read. I loved it, this amazing comic is Madman from Kitchen Sink Press (formally Tundra), it is written and illustrated by one of the rising stars in the comic field, Michael Dalton Allred. But when I went to look this great comic up, to my surprise it was not listed in my favorite comic price guide, yours! Madman was a bookshelf format three issue mini series running from March 1992 to May 1992. There was also a second mini series in standard format titled Madman Adventures. Madman will soon be published as an ongoing series by Dark Horse Comics. Allred has also worked on Dead Air and Graphique Musique from Slave Labour, Grafik Muzik, and Creatures of Id (which has a story containing the first appearance of Frank Einstein a.k.a. Madman) from Calibur Press, Everyman from Epic (Marvel), Vertigo Visions: The Geek #1, Sandman #54 from DC Comics, and, of course, Madman from Kitchen Sink. With accomplishments such as this I think Madman deserves the two or three inches of space it might take up on one of your pages. Thanks for your time.

Shawn Watkinson, Canada

The listing has been updated per your suggestion. Thanks for writing!

My Date, Etc.

A couple of years ago I purchased a NM-file copy of Canteen Kate #3 from a prominent New York Dealer. I trust it is a file copy, but there is no stamp or anything, so how can I know for sure?

Also, what was the first romance title, My Date or Young Romance? My Date is mostly a "funny-date" comic, but only mostly, because my copy of #3 contains a six page "Date Snatcher" story which is remarkably mature. This issue also has a lingerie panel in a humor story which is done rather spicily by Simon & Kirby. As these panels have come to be labeled as romance faux pas, they may be important to the early romance genre. It seems that the content places it as an important, but transitory title, as it pre-dates Young Romance.

Tom Wills, Tennessee

1) The term "File Copy" was originally applied to the copies that the publisher or printer kept "on file" as examples of their work. Sometime attorneys and accountants kept file copies of comics for various legal and tax reasons as well. Even individual writers and artists may have kept file copies. Because these copies were handled very little over the years, they often were maintained in exceptionally high grade. If there are no tell tale marks to indicate a specific lineage, the only way to know for sure is to obtain some sort of ownership history or "provenance" from the dealer. One can also consult with selected members of the Authenticity, Certification, And Grading Committee (ACG Committee for short, a standing committee of the American Association Of Comic Book Collectors). They may be able to help with certification. The most important thing about buying any "file copy" is to make sure you purchase it from a dealer who will place their reputation behind it. If a dealer is unwilling to absolutely guarantee the book as a file copy, don't buy it! 2) Most comic book historians acknowledge Young Romance #1 as the first comic of the romance genre. Although My date may have a single serious romance story, it does not qualify as the first all original, all serious romance book. Thanks for writing Tom and good luck on your collection. That's all the space we have for mail in this issue.If you'd care to write, send your comments, concerns, and questions to:

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